Sunday, January 23, 2011 | 4 sections / Vol. 36 / No. 48 / P15 | www.inquirer.net

MISS WORLD IN MANILA ... American Alexandria Mills, Miss World 2010, waves to onlookers upon her arrival on Monday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

SPORTS
Streaking Wesley So grabs solo lead with win No. 4 / A14

METRO
3 Taguig policemen cited for returning briefcase to American missionary / A17

BUSINESS
Investments in electronics hit $2.3B in '10 / B1

LIFESTYLE
World's best ballroom dancers coming to Manila / C1

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
EXCEED NEWS. FEARLESS VIEWS

P-Noy the Rat needs Miss Piggy, says seer

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

Broadcaster slain in Palawan

'DOC GERRY' ... The hard-hitting radio commentator was the 142nd journalist killed in the country since 1986, says a media group.

THIRD IN 2011

Oil companies jack up gasoline, diesel prices

By Aby R. Reina and Nina T. Chichioco

EFFECTIVE TODAY, prices of diesel will rise an additional P1 a liter, kerosene by 75 centavos a liter and gasoline by 50 centavos a liter—the third round of fuel price increases since the start of the year and the fifth round since last month.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and PNT Philippines dictated the increases to the Department of Energy (DOE) yesterday. Other oil firms had yet to make their announcements as of press time.

The fuel price hike came in the wake of an increase of at least 12 percent in rate taxes. However, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) says taxis must install meters using increases before they can charge higher fares.

The previous two fuel price increases this month had raised prices of gasoline by a total of P1.25 a liter and of diesel by a combined P1.20 a liter.

Before today's oil price hike, prices of unleaded gasoline with 5-10 ranged from P46 a liter to as much as P52 a liter, according to the energy department.

Diesel prices had already risen to between P38 and P41 a liter and kerosene to between P46 and P52 a liter as of last week.

BUSINESS A1

Suspected gunman cornered after chase

By Rodelyn G. Ando
Inquirer Southern Luzon

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—A lone gunman shot and killed outspoken radio commentator Gerardo Ortega while he was shopping in a used-clothes store yesterday after his daily morning broadcast, police reported.

Ortega, anchor of the Radyo Ilaw Broadcasting (RBS) local affiliate dwIL 1062 kHz, was gunned down inside the store along the national highway in this city.

The 57-year-old broadcaster and environmentalist, called "Doc Gerry" by friends and colleagues, suffered bullet wounds in the head and body, Supt. Rafael Rizalo said.

The alleged gunman, Marlon Dionisio, 31, attempted to flee from the scene but was cornered at a nearby parking area by Ortega's bodyguard and evacuees of a firetruck.

Police said Dionisio, who reportedly comes from Pagbilao, Quezon province, had an accomplice, who remained at large.

In a statement, the National Union of Journalists of the

BROADCASTER A6

'Police tip triggered car dealer's killing'

RAYMOND DOMINGUEZ: Powerful patron in high places?

By Dona D. Cerquiña, Reijo Inquirer; Christine O. Avendaño, Julie M. Aurelio and Akashi Pupa

CAR DEALER Antonio Frangiosa was killed because alleged car theft syndicate leader Raymond Dominguez had suspected him of tipping off the police about the gang's activities, a police official said yesterday.

In Malacañang, Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo said the authorities were looking into the possibility of connivance between corrupt government officials and car thieves, which enabled the gangs to flourish in their illegal operations.

FRANCISCO A6

Dominguez brothers face 28 car theft, drug charges

By Carmela Reyes Reinoso
Inquirer Central Luzon

CAMP GENERAL ALEJO SAN, POS, Bulacan—The brothers Raymond and Roger Dominguez, alleged leaders of a car theft gang linked to the recent killing of a Metro Manila car dealer, have faced at least 28 criminal cases in various courts in Bulacan and Pampanga since 2007.

Records showed that the cases mostly involved car theft, with a few others involving violations of the election

DOMINGUEZ A6

Go slow on Garcia, auditor told

By Lala B. Salaverría

FORMER government auditor Heidi Mendoza had faced an uphill battle in digging through transactions involving former military comptroller Carlos Garcia.

Mendoza was audited by lack of support from the Commission on Audit (COA) and was even told of a call from the "Palace" to go slow on Garcia.

Mendoza made these disclosures at a Dec. 3, 2008, hearing of the Sandiganbayan second division, during which she cited many a court transcript of the hearing showed. *[See transcript of Mendoza's testimony on Page A6]*

Mendoza led the COA team that looked into military funds and testified on alleged anomalous transactions involving Garcia.

Garcia, his wife and their three sons were charged with a P303-million plunder case, now the subject of a pending plea bargaining agreement.

Recently, Mendoza has given media in-

GO SLOW A6

HEIDI MENDOZA: Mystery responsibility

Co's friends, kin call on De Lima to scrap report

By Marlon Ramos and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

COLLEAGUES and relatives of slain botanist Leonard Co yesterday demanded the scrapping of a fact-finding report prepared by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) absolving the military in the killing.

Lily Co-Austria, Co's sister, said Justice Secretary Leila de Lima should take a second look at the report prepared by the joint DOJ-NBI panel which De Lima assigned to "fresh eyes" the Nov. 15, 2008, shooting of the botanist and his coworkers

CO'S FRIENDS A7

First pediatric liver transplant by PH team of doctors

NON ERICA CAN PLAY ... Liver transplant survivor plays with her nurse in her room at The Medical City in Pasig City.

By Nitz Cahiza

THREE-YEAR-OLD Catherine Erica Bartolomeo plays with her Barbie doll in the hospital bed, smiling and showing no signs of the liver ailment that had afflicted her since she was a baby.

The video clip of Erica playing and attempting to walk was shown during a news briefing at The Medical City (TMC) yesterday as her parents and doctors nurtured her evoked and the country's first successful liver transplant performed on a child.

Dr. Alfredo Tongson, pres-

FIRST A6

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

6/42*
4D 8 4
3D 12 29
2D 1 30
SUERTRES*
1:45PM 0 2 1
4PM 7 5 9
7PM 6 0 4

FOUR DIGITS*
3 8 9 8
MEGALOTTO 6/45
3 4 7 9 21 37
P4,500,000.00
SUPERGRANDLOTTO
6 17 29 31 41 47
P30,609,521.20

Prime suspect in bar exam blast appears before DOJ panel

By Marlon Ramos

A MAN accused of fueling a grenade at a group of well-wishers on the last day of the 2010 bar examinations out-lasted at the Department of Justice (DOJ) yesterday in three of Inquisitor Usiling him in the attack that left 47 people hurt.

Claiming he, too, was a victim, Anthony Sirpaniomio appeared for the first time at the preliminary investigation of the frustrated murder and multiple attempted murder cases filed against him in connection with the Sept. 26, 2010, bombing.

"I know the truth will set me free," Sirpaniomio told reporters after the hearing.

Wearing a dark blue polo, the former cell center agent looked uneasy as he entered the room packed with journalists.

Before he was called to the panel, the suspect, accompanied by his mother Maria Luisa, sat on a couch next to the father of Baise Lianel, the law student who lost both legs due to severe injuries from the explosion.

At times, Sirpaniomio stared blankly on the concrete floor as he listened to his three lawyers argue for his defense before the DOJ panel led by prosecution lawyer Gerard Guerlan.

He tried to build back his confidence as Guerlan called his name and asked him to subscribe to his counter affidavit. But he broke into tears when the swollen was asked to stand up to subscribe to her own affidavit as defense witness.

"I had come. I still don't understand why I'm here and why my family was dragged into this. I couldn't help but cry," Sirpaniomio said.

"To Baise and to all the victims, I just want to tell you that I'm also a victim here. I just hope that the truth would come out after this investigation," he said.

Sirpaniomio's counsels led by Joffrey Zarate questioned Guerlan's decision to throw out their motion asking the DOJ to issue a subpoena duces tecum to compel the National Bureau of Investigation and the Manila Police District to provide them copies of their investigation.

But Guerlan said he did not have the authority to do so and to cite anybody for contempt.

"I don't see any need right now in order for presentation of those documents. Anyway, this hearing is just for the determination of probable cause," Guerlan said.

Former Sen. Rodolfo Plaza, who appeared as Lianel's counsel, advised the defense lawyers to just exhaust all legal remedies to obtain the documents.

Lim, Moreno snub Hong Kong hostage inquiry

By Jaymee T. Gamil and Jeannette I. Andrade

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim and Vice Mayor Francisco "Isko Moreno" Domagoso have refused an invitation for them to appear as witnesses in Hong Kong's investigation into the hostage-taking incident in the Philippine capital on Aug. 23, 2010.

But the policeman brother of slain hostage-taker Rolando Mendoza is willing to testify there and challenged Manila officials to follow suit. "If they want Dix Ouch to come out."

The Hong Kong Governor's Office, through the Department of Justice (DOJ), earlier sent invitations to 11th Filipinos to appear before a council Noon Feb. 14 in March 18 to shed light on the hostage taking fiasco that led to the death of eight Hong Kong tourists and the hostage-taker.

The list includes Lim and Domagoso, who were initially held liable for the botched hostage rescue.

Mikeathing said it was entirely up in the 11th witnesses to decide whether or not they wanted to testify.

Lim: I'm not going

"I will not go there," Lim said point-blank, when the issue was brought up at the Department of the Interior and Local Government's Peace and Order Council meeting at City Hall yesterday.

"The Philippine government has already conducted its own investigation. (Ochaeta) Mendoza was found to have been the one who killed the tourists. What else is there to investigate? I have already responded and given my side," he said.

"They should respect the findings of our investigation. We did our commendations of the sovereignty and independence of the Philippines," he added on Filipino.

Domagoso agreed, saying the Hong Kong government could simply refer to their affidavits and other official records already with the DOJ.

"The invitation was just a request. We can refuse. The letter stated 'if you wish to attend, call us,'" he added.

The vice mayor expressed confusion that their refusal would not strain diplomatic ties between China and the Philippines. "It is not a matter between two states. The Hong Kong government is just a local government unit," he said.

The Philippines and Hong Kong have on training initiated bilateral assistance treaty to cooperate on judicial cooperation, particularly concerning smuggling and corruption.

Mendoza: I'll be there

Redesignated SPO2 Gregorio Mendoza, brother of the slain hostage taker, expressed willingness to testify at the Hong Kong inquiry.

In an interview, Mendoza also assailed the decision of the justice department in the additional charges of illegal possession of firearms against him. He reiterated that his service pistol was issued to him by the Philippine National Police.

Showing the inquests a copy of the statement from Hong Kong, which was forwarded to him on Saturday by DOJ chief state counsel Ricardo Paras, Mendoza said: "I am very much willing to give my personal testimony in order to give the truth."

He said Lim and his deputy Domagoso should not "be culpable/they would be determined. If they are in good faith, why not attend? I am in good faith, that is why I am going."

The statement, issued by Hong Kong minister Michael Chan, explained Mendoza's details about the circumstances behind the death of the hostages.

Mendoza said he had already relayed to Hong Kong authorities his intention to appear.

COAST GUARD personnel interview the five Americans on board the Pinaggala in this photo supplied by the agency.

Boat reported missing reaches Maasin

By Jaci Arriola
Inquirer Visayas

MAASIN CITY—A catamaran reported missing with five Americans on board arrived here early Monday but refueling and left for Cebu a few hours later.

The 20-foot, twin-hulled SV Pinaggala was rescued by the BRP Ina Juan, according to Chief Petty Officer Pro. dennis Manangan, head of the Maasin Coast Guard.

Its crew members were identified as James (Jim Bell, captain; Corey Goldhaw, Brandi Pratt, Steven Blanken and Filipino dancer Jun Gomez.

The boat left Guam on Oct. 8 and was reported missing after it failed to reach the port of Lamon in Cebu on Oct. 18. Bell said the crew had to repair a broken rudder.

"We don't know who reported it, but we were not missing. We just have trouble with our steering so we were delayed for over a week," Bell told the Inquirer.

In his report to the Philippine Coast Guard, Bell said he gave the boat operator in Guam the contact number of his wife and asked him to inform her about the delay.

Bell said his wife, however, had already left for the United States because her father had died.

"We thought everyone knew (that we were delayed because of the rudder problem). It turned out nobody knew," he said.

Bell said the boat could no longer be connected because its radio battery was nearly dead.

It suffered further delay because there was no wind, he said.

The Pinaggala was found by a Coast Guard Islander plane off Hilusoo Island in Dinagat, Surigao, on Sunday noon.

Manangan said the plane was scanning the area after the US Coast Guard alerted the PCG aerial center in Manila that the boat was missing.

The San Juan was sent to Maasin to help in the search.

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Stiffer penalties for car theft sought

By TJ Burgonio and Cynthia D. Balana

MORE LAWMAKERS are calling for stiffer penalties, including death, for car thieves in response to the recent spate of violent car theft cases in the country.

Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV filed a bill seeking to amend the Anti-Carnapping Act to make car theft a non-bailable offense on certain conditions, and to increase the penalties.

At the House of Representatives, Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, chairman of the House committee on public order and safety, filed a similar bill to jack up prison terms for the crime.

Quezon City Rep. Winnie Castelo also wanted car theft to be considered a "heinous crime" punishable by death.

Trillanes' Senate bill 2633 will make car theft a non-bailable crime if it is committed by a syndicate or carried out with force, intimidation or violence, or when the owner, driver or passenger of the stolen vehicle is killed in the commission of the crime.

The senator proposed a penalty of not less than 17 years and four months if the crime was committed without force or intimidation, and up to life imprisonment if an occupant is killed.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said car theft had to be established as a capital offense to be non-bailable. He would not see how a simple case of car theft could be made a capital offense.

Enrile said the best strategy was to attack violence in the car theft by focusing on its goodness, consistent, purposeful enforcement of the law without let up. That's all. That's all you need. To extract, always moving forward against the criminals," he said.

Rodriguez's bill specifies a jail sentence of 12 to 14 years if no violence is employed, and less than 17 years if force and intimidation is used, and life imprisonment to death if an occupant is killed or raped.

The lawmakers said they were appalled by the brazen acts of syndicates who managed to outwit the law and continue their nefarious trade.

Trillanes said he was shocked to hear that in one case, the suspected mastermind of a car theft ring had been able to evade detention and was back on free within 15 minutes.

Senators Ramon Revilla and Francis Escudero earlier backed calls to make the crime non-bailable following the gruesome killings of car dealers Roman Dungallo, Emerson Lemuel and Eduardo Ismael earlier this month.

Rodriguez said today's thieves "are even more sly and innovative" and have used "advanced and high technology gadgets" in their operations.

They have become "wilder, ruthless to no longer safe for the car owners to leave their vehicles in parking areas such as those in airport, shopping centers or churches," he added.

Castelo said Congress must "respond to the emergencies of the times" when the lives and properties of citizens "are put in close and imminent danger."

"The string of serious, grave, and violent crimes that lead back to the doorstep of the (Philippine National Police) organization how celebrate the need to arrest or rebuild the rule of law in the country," she said.

To stop this "outburst of violence" involving even lawmen may require lifting the moratorium on the death penalty, she added.

Castelo said the upsurge of crimes related to car theft had "pushed the panic button" and revived the debate on the death penalty.

Palace drafts new RH bill, elates bishops

By Christine O. Avendaño and Jocelyn R. Uy

MALACAÑANG yesterday assured the local Catholic Church that the responsible parenthood bill it was drafting and which President Aquino had endorsed to Congress is one of his priority bills was not meant to set government population targets but to alleviate poverty.

For the second time, Palace officials and Catholic bishops met to discuss the President's stand on family planning and the responsible parenthood bill, renamed by the Palace apparently to distinguish it from the controversial reproductive health (RH) bill pending in Congress.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda, who was at the meeting, told reporters Palace officials made it clear to the bishops the responsible parenthood bill was "primarily a poverty-reduction" measure.

This came after some bishops had expressed concern the measure was meant to target a particular growth rate, according to Lacierda.

Access to info

He said the bishops were assured this was not the case as the bill would aim to help the poor who tended to "have big families" by giving them access to information on ways to plan family size.

"We give them choices for them to come up with a decision on when to have babies, spacing (their children) and all their concerns which is a large measure help these (plan a family)" Lacierda said.

"It's more again really of making sure the individual would live a life that they are afford without any burden on the family itself. That's important and therefore again we're saying, let's provide access to all the information about it," he said.

Lacierda said Health Secretary Enrique Ona was in charge of drafting the responsible parenthood bill and that it would be discussed in the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council's (Ledac) meeting at the end of the January.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) said Malacañang had agreed with the Church's position that the growing population had no relation to poverty.

Such an admission from the government was an indication that "things were becoming clearer" for both the Church and the Palace as to the many issues surrounding family planning, said CBCP spokesman general Msgr. Juanito Figura in a press conference yesterday.

Not the reason

Figura said Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman revealed during the dialogue that the Cabinet in its cluster meetings had not pinpointed the spread of population trend as the reason most Filipinos were living in poverty.

"According to her, the main concern of the government is to ensure that parents take good care of their children," Figura said.

"We are beginning to see things clearer... we begin to know more about the government's side and they also begin to understand our side," he said.

Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto, chair of the CBCP Episcopal Commission on Family and Life, said the dialogue with Malacañang was a "very opportune time" to explain what the Church meant by responsible parenthood.

Principle of generosity

"It's a principle of generosity," he said during the news conference. "Couples are not obliged by the Church to bring into the world children they can't raise as it is not of God but they should also not be obliged or selfish in bringing children into the world."

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III said Malacañang had softened on the RH bill by backing a responsible parenthood bill.

"It's a sign of weakness of the RH bill. They have retreated because they know their position is not the right one," Sotto, a pro-life advocate, told reporters.

"So their target now is to push for the poverty alleviation issue, and not population control issue. There I'm with them," he said. With a report from TJ Burgonio

'No one from COA gave me the support that I needed'

BELOW is the transcript of the cross-examination of prosecution witness Heidi L. Mendoza by Commission De Jesus during the Dec 2, 2008, hearing of the Sandiganbayan second division.

Commission de Jesus: And those were the subject of his report Exhibit "I"?

Heidi L. Mendoza: Yes, sir.

De Jesus: So, his report actually was included in Exhibit "K" with respect to those findings on unliquidated which were subject of his earlier inspections, is that correct, Madam Witness?

Mendoza: That's why sir, it is included in the analysis. Instead it is not included in verbatim that's why I said it is not included per se. I mean it was not reflected in the report.

De Jesus: So, you included in the analysis portion of Exhibit "K" the report of Jeogie Calibo. Is marked as Exhibit "I," is that correct, Madam Witness?

Mendoza: Yes, sir, specifically when I mentioned that the suppliers do not exist and the suppliers are owned by one and the same person.

De Jesus: Madam Witness, when did you complete Exhibit "I"?

Mendoza: Exhibit "I" is a work in progress. When I submitted it I think I submitted it as there was no date in the report because, as I earlier testified, I was very much frustrated with the things happening around. My interviews were in design and it have the assignment coming so I completed it before I filed my resignation, sir.

Dr. Jesus: When did you resign, Madam Witness?

Mendoza: I resigned from the Commission on Audit effective March 16, 2005 but it was not accepted. I was given another two months but then in my documentation supporting my resignation I chose the date March 16 as my final resignation, sir.

De Jesus: So, you completed Exhibit "K" before you resigned on March 16, 2005, is that correct Madam Witness?

Mendoza: Yes, sir. I realized that it was just the formal submission. As I earlier testified during the direct testimony, I said that verbally he requested to me as I was doing the report and the pertinent report were already submitted, but we have to...

De Jesus: She should remember that, Your Honors.

Mendoza: That is one year ago, Your Honors.

Justice Teresita Dizon Rabe: Any what if she cannot remember? Don't you have your documents, her because that is already one year ago.

De Jesus: We submit, Your Honors. May we be allowed to continue, Your Honors please.

Mendoza: Just a moment, you said that you were frustrated, what was the cause of your frustration?

Mendoza: Your Honors, I would like to be very honest with this, Your Honors, Hon... (In this point, the witness to be emotional and began shedding tears.)

Rabe: Did I strike a sentimental note there, your honor?

Mendoza: Your Honors, I have nothing against the organization and nothing against the institution. I am just doing my task. I am frustrated because no one from the Commission of Audit gave me the support that I needed.

When I was doing the audit, it was difficult for me because some of my teammates are actually on the other side and I am the chief. So, what I did I was in search out. Not all members of the team are honest. So, it is the conduct of the audit because if could not trust them. So, I have to watch my back. I have to watch the documents when I do the audit.

I was so frustrated because I was trying to do some more in depth techniques. I was trying to ask permission to go to the United Nations to pursue the different irregularities that we have uncovered but I was not allowed.

Rabe: When you said some of your team members were on the other side, you mean to say they were in support of the respondent?

Mendoza: Into the report, dont but they were on the other side, Your Honor.

Rabe: What do you mean by the other side?

Mendoza: Your Honors, it is difficult to explain before this Honorable court. I could explain it to your chamber perhaps.

Presiding Justice Edgardo Cruz: Off the record, Your Honors.

Justice Samuel Martires: No, let it be on record. You were designated as part of the team to investigate the financial transactions of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and that designation came from the Chairman of the Commission on Audit?

Mendoza: Your Honor, at that instance, I have to tell it all.

Martires: No, just answer my question.

Mendoza: The chairman was not there, your Honor.

Martires: So, who designated you to become a member of the team?

Mendoza: Commissioner Galvante, Your Honor who was then the officer in charge for the chairman was not there.

Martires: And this was by reason of an agreement between the Office of the Ombudsman and the Commission on Audit?

Mendoza: Yes, Your Honor.

Martires: Where the report was about to be finished, the Commission on Audit no longer requested your report?

Mendoza: Your Honor, I have to be very honest. Before I conduct the audit I was already warned that I have to go slowly that is what is happening that I cannot be able to explain to this court. I had an instruction and I was told by somebody that there was a call coming from the Palace that I have to go slowly, sir.

Martires then asked her: "In fact, you were also confronted by a government official from testifying in this case?"

Assistant commissioner

Mendoza answered in the affirmative, adding that she was also warned against taking the assignment.

"I was also discouraged by no less than the assistant commissioner who told me that there was an order signed by the General and so on and so forth, and almost all of the officials advised me not to accept this assignment. So, it was against all odds," she said.

Mendoza said she had nothing personal against Garcia or the AFP.

"I would not waste my time or my pleasure because I am not undermined of my position or person. I am not claiming any pay or honorarium for my appearance," she added.

Justice Edilberto Sandoval, the division chair, then asked Mendoza if she was taking the matter personally.

Pilosa: She answered "no" and said she could not get the COA support, Sandoval said she could have validated herself if she did not want to take the matter personally.

Civic duty

But Mendoza said that she felt that it was her duty to continue the audit.

"Your Honor, I would like to fulfill my civic responsibility so as a public servant I have to continue my career," she said, narrating emotional and crying.

Rabe said the court had to ask the questions, although it appeared making Mendoza so emotional.

"The reason is so sorry [for] to question that the witness had to be put in an emotional state but we want to be aware of any background on this matter and perhaps the court will also acknowledge the gallantry of the witness in the performance of her duties despite all odds," Rabe said.

During Mendoza's cross-examination by Garcia's lawyer Commissioner de Jesus, the latter called subscriber former Commissioner Ishmael Mariano, who filed the plunder case, had told Mendoza to look for evidence for the Office of the Ombudsman to support the plunder case.

Mendoza replied that she could not recall and said she was reporting to Field Investigation Assistant Ombudsman Wilfredo Cacandegan.

De Jesus asked if Cacandegan told her that she must look for evidence against Garcia, to which she said that Cacandegan did not give her any instructions with respect to her profession as an auditor.

De Jesus also questioned Mendoza why in her report, she referred to Garcia as respondent as the respondent, but did not mention Garcia's assignatory in the deeds she studied, or the program director of the seminars that were investigated.

Mendoza said it was not for her to consider the military officials as respondents, saying she was just the auditor who analyzed the financial transactions.

Mendoza's statements on her struggles in auditing the military establishment were made on the second to the last hearing that she had attended.

Mendoza, a prosecution witness, first testified in September 2007, and continued appearing in court in October and November 2008 before she went sick. She also testified in various dates in October, November and December 2008.

Go slow on Garcia, auditor told

From page A1

reviews in which she said that while she was leaving the appreciation of evidence up in the courts, she believed that there was strong evidence against Garcia.

She contradicted the statements of government prosecutors who had said that there was not enough proof to pin Garcia down for plunder.

The prosecutors said that the "small" cases prompted their agreement to a plea bargain deal with Garcia, under which the latter would plead guilty to the lesser offenses of direct bribery and facilitating money laundering, and would turn over to the state his and his family's assets amounting to P135 million.

Garcia posted bail last month and was released from detention in Camp Crame in Quezon City.

Frustrated

Mendoza said she was frustrated during the course of her investigation because she felt she was not supported by the COA. She also had to resist calls allegedly become some of the people she was working with did not back her.

She became emotional before the court when Justice Teresita Dizon Rabe asked her why she felt frustrated.

"Your Honors, I have nothing against the respondent and nothing against the institution. I am just doing my task. I am frustrated because no one from the Commission on Audit gave me the support that I needed and, when I was doing the audit, it was so difficult for me because some of my teammates are actually on the other side and I am the chief," she said.

She said that she had all members of the team helped in the audit because she could not trust them, and that she had to watch her back and the documents.

P200-M reimbursement

She said she was frustrated because she was trying to apply more audit techniques and wanted to go to the United Nations to pursue different irregularities that the team had uncovered, but she was not allowed to do so.

The United Nations reimbursed the Philippine military P200 million for expenses it had advanced for sending Filipino peacekeepers abroad.

Bohlen then asked her what she meant by "the other side."

She said it was difficult to explain and asked if she could elaborate on this to the justice's chambers. Prosecutor Joseph Capistrano also said that her statement be off the record.

But Justice Samuel Martires said that it had to be on the record. He asked Mendoza who designated her as part of the team to investigate the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Tread lightly

She said it was a Commissioner Galvez, who was then officer in charge of the COA.

Mendoza said during the Dec. 2, 2008, hearing that even before she began her audit, she was cautioned to tread lightly, and someone told her that this was what the "Palace" wanted.

But she added that she could not verify that statement because it was only relayed to her.

She made the statement when asked by Martires whether the COA no longer required her report when it was completed.

"Your Honor, I have to be very honest. Before I conducted the audit I was already warned that I have to go slowly, that is what is happening that I have to explain to this court. I had an instruction and I was told by somebody that there was a call coming from the Palace that I have to go slowly," she said.

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"Your Honor, I would like to fulfill my civic responsibility so as a public servant I have to continue my career," she said, narrating emotional and crying.

Bohlen said the court had to ask the questions, although it appeared making Mendoza so emotional.

"The reason is so sorry [for] to question that the witness had to be put in an emotional state but we want to be aware of any background on this matter and perhaps the court will also acknowledge the gallantry of the witness in the performance of her duties despite all odds," Bohlen said.

During Mendoza's cross-examination by Garcia's lawyer Commissioner de Jesus, the latter called subscriber former Commissioner Ishmael Mariano, who filed the plunder case, had told Mendoza to look for evidence for the Office of the Ombudsman to support the plunder case.

Mendoza replied that she could not recall and said she was reporting to Field Investigation Assistant Ombudsman Wilfredo Cacandegan.

De Jesus asked if Cacandegan told her that she must look for evidence against Garcia, to which she said that Cacandegan did not give her any instructions with respect to her profession as an auditor.

De Jesus also questioned Mendoza why in her report, she referred to Garcia as respondent as the respondent, but did not mention Garcia's assignatory in the deeds she studied, or the program director of the seminars that were investigated.

Mendoza said it was not for her to consider the military officials as respondents, saying she was just the auditor who analyzed the financial transactions.

Mendoza's statements on her struggles in auditing the military establishment were made on the second to the last hearing that she had attended.

Mendoza, a prosecution witness, first testified in September 2007, and continued appearing in court in October and November 2008 before she went sick. She also testified in various dates in October, November and December 2008.

GARCIA: Protecting consortia?

First pediatric liver transplant by PH team of doctors

From page A1

dent and CEO of TMC, described the operation as a historic event and a landmark achievement for the country.

"This is the first time a successful pediatric liver transplant has been performed in the Philippines by an all-Filipino medical staff," Bengzon said.

The 11-member surgical team performed the operation on Jan. 7, removing Ivan's liver entirely and replacing it with a graft from the liver of her auntie, Jefferson Llantoso.

The P1.2-million procedure was shouldered by TMC and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO).

The procedure started at 7 a.m. on Jan. 7 and ended early the following day.

The child was confined at the hospital's pediatric intensive care unit for the first eight days after the surgery and was then moved to a regular room on Sunday.

"She is on her way to full recovery. We are slowly reaching her to walk and regain her strength. Our appetite is improving," said Dr. Ma. Kristina Bautista, director of TMC's Center for Liver Disease Management and Transplantation.

She said Ivan had already expressed interest in playing with other kids and going to school.

'God's gift'

For the child's mother, Carmelita Sumaoyan-Ines, seeing her youngest daughter happy and becoming healthy every day was "God's gift for a new life."

She said her gratitude to her 18-year-old cousin Llantoso was overflowing.

Llantoso has not only touched the businessman but also PCSO Chair Margie Juico who has promised to support this high school and college education.

Ivan's mother, a dropout from high school, had to convince his parents to allow him the basic question of his love: "Ibibigay mo ba ang isang bahagi ng katawan mo para mabuhay ang bata?" (Will you give what we can afford to give?)" he said.

Carmelita's eyes welled with tears as she recalled Ivan's illness.

Two months after she was born, Ivan immediately showed signs of jaundice, the yellow discoloration of the skin while her abdomen became swollen due to an enlarged liver and spleen.

Begging for help

Two years later, a liver biopsy and other tests indicated Ivan had liver cirrhosis and an end-stage liver disease and would die without a liver transplant.

The Sumaoyan-Ines family from one hospital to another to find a cure for their child's sickness and begged for financial help.

"I did not expect this. Even if some have ignored us, most have offered help," Carmelita said.

She noted encountering people making snide remarks about their appeal for financial assistance.

De Ville said that in the history of liver transplant surgery in the Philippines, one survived, apart from Ivan, while the rest died 17 months up to a year after the operation.

Brain-dead donor

The other survivor, a 21-year-old veteran nurse was switched, received a liver from a "brain dead" person in 2006.

"Due to the limited treatment options available in the various medical centers in the Philippines, many people with liver conditions have to the pass chosen to leave the country to seek treatment abroad," De Ville said.

Filipinos, she said, had to spend large sums of money for transport and accommodation, in addition to the costs of care, abroad.

P32-M center

Bengzon said TMC established the P32-million Center for Liver Disease Management and Transplantation in response to the "tremendous gap in the healthcare industry."

The center, he said, is a comprehensive facility that encompasses the "seamless integration of medical, surgical and radiologic expertise" and accommodates a myriad of state of the art diagnostic and therapeutic services.

Ivan's transplant is a culmination of four years of preparations, including investments in facilities, equipment and the training of doctors and nurses, Bengzon said.

ILO: Job recovery still lags in region

By Philip C. Tubeza

[illegible] A JOBLESS rebound in the economies of many countries, job recovery in the Asia Pacific region continues to lag behind growth, the International Labor Organization (ILO) said.

The agency foresaw "little change" in unemployment in more Asia-Pacific countries which are enjoying rapid economic growths in 2011. It pegged the global unemployment rate at 6.1 percent, or 203.3 million people without jobs.

"Overall, the employment outlook is uncertain, with youth unemployment, vulnerable employment, working poverty and a lack of social protection among concerns facing policymakers," the ILO said in its "Global Employment Trends 2011: The challenge of a jobs recovery" annual employment trends survey.

In Southeast Asia and the Pacific, the crisis affected the quality of employment more than the quantity in some economies, it said.

"Although unemployment is now below or at pre-crisis levels in some countries, regional unemployment has only edged down slightly, from 5.2 percent in 2009 to 5.1 percent in 2010, and is expected to show little change in 2011," it said.

"Vulnerable employment has increased and youth unemployment is an issue," the ILO added.

The report said the growth recovery placed Asia and Pacific ahead of the economy "and full and productive employment needs to become a core macroeconomic policy goal."

Moreover, it said, focus should be made on job quality, "in particular ensuring a stronger link between productivity growth and wage growth."

The report cautioned countries in the region than the huge inflow of foreign capital "is a key challenge to both growth and jobs, bringing [instant, such as asset bubbles and inflation."

"To spin of a highly differentiated recovery in labor markets across the world the tremendous human costs of the recession are still with us," ILO Director-General Juan Somavia said on the eve of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

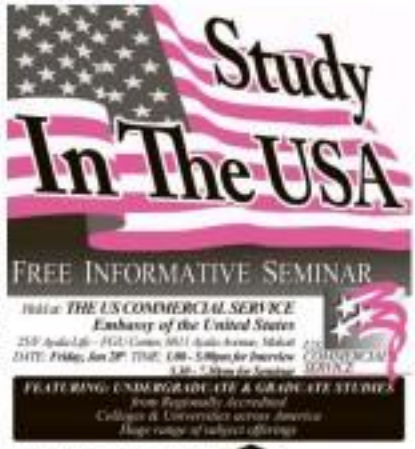
"There is one common challenge we need to rethink our standard macroeconomic policy mixes and make quality job creation and decent work a central target of macroeconomic policies, alongside high growth, low inflation and balanced public budgets," Somavia said.

"We must not forget that for people the quality of work defines the quality of a society," he added.

The ILO said 78 million young people (aged 15-24) were unemployed worldwide in 2010, or well above the 2007 pre-crisis level of 73.5 million but down from 81 million in 2009.

The global youth unemployment rate was 12.6 percent in 2010, 2.6 times the adult unemployment rate.

"Policymakers should remember that the income compensations and sustainable development of their societies depends on creating opportunities for young people today," said Sandeep Sanaseeve, ILO Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific.



Ortega project manager of ABS-CBN's Bayan Ni Juan

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—He had to ask friends to buy him a plane ticket from Manila when he was enrolled in a nursing school in Puerto Princesa City. Such an ordeal for candidate Ariel the wake of his murdered friend, radio broadcaster Fernando "Dong" Batul.

Gerardo Ortega, 47, a veteran journalist publicly called "Doc Gerry" but no inkling then he would become the second media victim in Palawan in recent years to succumb to an increasingly violent climate of hatred and vengeance in the region.

Right after his morning radio program yesterday, Ortega was indulging in his favorite pastime—bargain hunting for used clothing in a second-hand shop in the city's main mall—when he was shot and killed at close range.

"This will have a chilling effect on the Palawan media. The message that [hitter Ortega's murder is telling us is that we should stop being critical of issues that surround us," said Tamian Lucas, president of the Palawan Press Club.

Ortega had denounced illegal rival airwaves with his daily radio program "Bantarak" and his scathing commentary on graft and corruption in the local government. He also exposed alleged government personalities he identified with mining interests.

Ortega's adversary cut across both his personal convictions and his day job as provincial project manager of ABS-CBN's Bayan Ni Juan program on resettlement development.

A day before he was killed, he met with ABS-CBN top honchos Gina Lopez and Pierre Princess City Mayor Edward Hagedorn to map out an antimining campaign.

"This will be a three-month intensive information drive to increase awareness about the dangers of mining. We will not only focus on Palawan as our audience, this will also be a [nationwide information drive," Ortega later told the bigwigs.

Ortega was a former member of the provincial board and earned the reputation as a maverick politician identified with civil society causes such as environmental protection and fire fight against corruption.

At one point, he ran for governor losing last month to the current showing while spending a measly P300,000 from his personal pocket.

As a commentator, he took up issues his late friend Batul espoused.

Ortega was station manager in the radio station where Batul worked. Previous to that, he was the head of the Crossville Farm, a wildlife rescue center and tourist attraction, where Batul was an information officer.

"It is a horror here," Ortega said of his childhood.

"However, I really got a chance to speak about issues once a week during privilege hours of the provincial board. Now, I get to deliver a privilege speech on a daily basis," he once told this reporter.

Ortega is survived by his wife Patricia, also a veterinarian, Kimberlyn D. Avila, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Broadcaster slain in Palawan; suspected gunman cornered

From page A1

Philippines (NUJP) said Gerardo was the 142nd journalist killed since the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution in the country, regarded as one of the most dangerous places for media people. He was the third journalist to be murdered under the Aquino administration.

National Bureau of Investigation agent Carlito Cadiao declined to name a suspected gunman in the killing because of the sensitive nature of the case but said investigators had good leads.

"There is good information, that's all I can say," Cadiao said.

Campaign against mining

Ortega, a former provincial board member who once made an unsuccessful bid for governor, was a staunch critic of the current provincial administration and activities of mining companies in Palawan, speaking out often against corruption in his 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. program.

He had been moving around with a bodyguard since last January when he kept receiving death threats through text messages, said Aries Mesgos, a dos8 colleague.

Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn said Ortega, who was also the project director of ABS-CBN's Bayan Ni Juan project in Puerto Princesa, was set to travel to Manila on Tuesday to meet with him.

They were in discussions with other antimining advocates via zoom conference.

Ortega had denounced illegal airwaves with his daily radio program "Bantarak" and his scathing commentary on graft and corruption in the local government. He also exposed government personalities he identified with mining interests.

P100,000 contract

A police source said investigators were trying to verify reports that the shooter had been contracted for the hit job for P100,000 with a down payment of P10,000.

Investigators have also been able to track down the registry of the .45 cal. automatic that was used in the killing.

The heinous slay learned from an investigator that the gunman had checked to sit at a local hotel as early as Dec. 24.

Palawan Gov. Abraham Kahlil Mitra, in a statement, denounced Ortega's killing and ordered the provincial police office to "immediately resolve the killing."

Mitra challenged Supt. Reynaldo Jagmis, the new provincial police director, "to solve this crime right away together with other reported killings like the firing of guns at the house of Rizal Mayor Nicanor Biscocho and the killing incident in Balabac a few days ago."

Killing denounced

The NUJP chapter in Palawan and the Palawan Press Club have condemned the cloning, describing that the investigation be "transparent and speedy."

"Ortega's killing may have a direct connection with his work as a media practitioner and his comments both in the many columns of the government he criticized," said Jonathan Tesoro, editor at the NUJP website that "Doc Gerry was a good friend, a good person, a good family man, and a good Dolomedio. He wanted nothing but the best for Palawan. He cared how moved and he wished others did but he chose to serve Palawan."

'Police tip triggered car dealer's killing'

From page A1

Interviewed on Radyo Inquirer former Supt. Nonnito Castillo quoted detained suspect Alfred Mendiola as saying that Dominguez had given the police a tip that led to the police raid on the gang's hideaway in a condominium in Mandaluyong City last November.

Castillo, spokesperson of the Special Investigation Task Group investigating the Ozamiz Lozano and Lozano's companion Jeanne Sessel, accused police had no evidence of any linkup between Evangelista and the Dominguez gang.

"It's not established," Castillo said in a riot of English and Filipino when interviewed on the program "Bantay" hosted by Jay Sonza and Ben Mascarinas.

"On the case trading business, it's possible that they have many owners, the possible buyers. It's possible they would know each other, but there's no evidence to support that they were friends or buddies."

In the raid on Mendiola's condo unit, police recovered eight stolen SUVs at the basement of the Belo Storie condominium, where Dominguez and stolen Barrios Deala supposedly had been staying.

Mendiola and another arrested suspect, Ferdinand Ibrahim, led police to Dominguez's supposed hideout in Dampalit last week-end. Among the items recovered from the architect's lair were the latter driver's license of Evangelista and a pair of slippers.

Jail mates

Castillo said Mendiola revealed he met Dominguez at the Bulacan provincial jail while they were both in police custody. Mendiola said he had been arrested along with the Dominguez group since he got out of jail late last year, including on the night of Jan. 13, when Evangelista was abducted.

According to Castillo, Mendiola and Ibrahim said they considered Evangelista as they only planned to take Evangelista's car, not murder him.

They told police the location of the group's safe house in Pampanga, which yielded possible evidence, including a pair of slippers that police allegedly belonging to Alma Bella Dy-quidciano's supposed gunman.

Castillo said the police were checking information that the suspects were being protected by influential persons.

Castillo also urged people with information about the case to call the NBI hot line at 09175205033 or 09498234447.

On Saturday night, police filed a complaint of kidnapping with murder and another complaint of car theft in the Quezon City prosecutor's office against Dominguez, Mendiola and Ibrahim, as well as others who are still at large.

But last night, during inquest proceedings, police amended the last charge against Dominguez to kidnapping with homicide. They said the change in date official explanation for amending the complaint against Dominguez.

His lawyer, Raymund Bidad, said Dominguez chose to undergo a preliminary investigation on the charges against him.

Links with corrupt people

At the Palace, Bolinodo said he did not consider as a closed case the murders of Evangelista and Salvacion since they could remedy had Dominguez, Mendiola and Ibrahim to custody.

Bolinodo said the police had not yet established the motive for the killings and if the murders were linked with each other.

He said the investigators also had to look into the "accessabilities" of other people, adding there was a need to determine if Dominguez's group was able to operate because they had help from corrupt officials in the government agencies.

"Operating on a business will not flourish and prosper if it has no others, like those in charge of registering vehicles," he told reporters in Filipino.

"They are not doing this for fun or for whatever. This is a syndicate whose objective is to make money and it's difficult for this syndicate to thrive if it had no others," Bolinodo stressed.

Aside from checking those in charge of registering vehicles, Bolinodo said the authorities would also look into any involvement of police officials and even prosecutors with the Dominguez group.

P4M for bail

Bolinodo said Dominguez revealed to have gotten all easy despite the 11 criminal cases filed against him in the past, many of which involved car robbery, a bailable offense.

An inquiry into theft in Dampalit, Mr. Bidad, disclosed that Dominguez and his brother Roger have at least 28 pending criminal cases in various courts in three two provinces. (See related story on Page A2).

Bolinodo said Dominguez had also been charged with a non-bailable offense but was able to post bail. He said he wanted to find out why this happened.

"Why did prosecutors not oppose the motion to grant bail?" Bolinodo asked.

Bolinodo said that based on his computations, Dominguez was able to raise P4 million in bail money for these cases.

He said he was confident the government would able to remove "the crime wave as many people put it ... [in] the next two to three weeks."

Bolinodo also said he had not gathered any evidence to support unconfirmed reports that the current wave of crimes was part of a destabilization effort against the Aquino administration.

PNP warning

The Philippine National Police warned it would pull no punches against police officers found to be in cahoots with the Dominguez gang.

PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Agripinero Cruz said the police leadership "never tolerates any wrongdoing or violation of the law by any police officer."

Cruz said that Mendiola and Ibrahim were being considered as possible state witnesses in the murder cases.

Speaking at a Manila forum, Cruz said police had launched a manhunt for the six others implicated in the Evangelista murder case, including Dominguez's brother, who has avid, before he would turn himself in, as what his brother Rogemund has done.

Others being hunted were a certain Rolly Jimeno, Abel and a man John Doe, said Cruz.

"Lawyers answering their [Mendiola's and Ibrahim's] confessions before that they can be of big help in prosecuting these cases as state witnesses against the members of the Dominguez group," Cruz said.

Chief Supt. Alan Purisima, Central Luzon police director, said that in the absence of a court order, the police still had no basis to arrest the Dominguez brothers although they had been identified by two witnesses as the supposed masterminds of the Evangelista murder.

Purisima said the investigation had not produced any information to show the involvement of any high-ranked police officials in the Lozano and Evangelista cases.

Gun owners identified

Police have identified the owners of the three guns found in the Dominguez safe house of the Dominguez group.

Castillo said the police found the guns through the PNP Firearms and Explosives Division.

Asked to ask the owners how these firearms ended up there (in the safe house), Castillo said.

One of the guns, a .40 cal. pistol, is supposedly registered to the name of Raymund Dominguez, The other two, a .45-cal. pistol and a 9 mm pistol, were registered in two private individuals whom Castillo did not identify. PNB reports from Aurelio B. Uy in Manila and Pamela Perez, Inquirer Central Luzon

Dominguez brothers face 28 car theft, drug charges

From page A1

gun ban, and illegal drugs. One of the car theft cases against Raymund included a homicide charge.

Raymund, 36, the younger of the brothers who turned himself in to the Bulacan police last weekend, has 28 pending cases in the Bulacan Regional Trial Court in Malolos City.

A 19th case, an illegal drugs complaint filed at RTC Branch 78, also in Malolos in 2007, had been dismissed.

10 cases

His brother, Roger, 29, is facing 18 car theft cases—one in the Bulacan RTC and nine in a court in Angeles City in Pampanga.

Lawyer Joey Cruz, who has also the defense for the brothers, said he did not know of any other cases against them in other courts.

Cruz said Raymund, who previously surrendered to the Malacañan palace last November, was granted temporary freedom after he completed payment of a P1-million bail bond. He was able to come past of the P1 million recommended bail bond for his 10 cases.

Raymund was released from the Bulacan provincial jail on Dec. 20.

Cruz said a person who's Raymund had asked to post bail for his cases made the last bail transaction on Dec. 20, paving the way for his release.

The last two cases settled on that day were on theft complaints filed by Evangelista Cristina Rosas and Fiorino Tanghal at RTC Branch 19 in Malolos. The cases were filed in 2010.

The court recommended a bail bond of P180,000 in the case filed by Rosas and P300,000 in the case filed by Rosas and Tanghal.

9 cases

Cruz said Roger had posted bail for the nine cases he is facing in the Angeles City court. A car theft case filed against him in the Bulacan RTC Branch 28 in Malolos City is also pending while he had posted bail in another case.

Other cases

In 2010, eight car theft cases were filed against Raymund.

Those were two cases filed by Estrella Wenie Dalusi in the Bulacan RTC Branch 78. The court recommended a bail bond of P360,000 for each case.

The other cases were filed by Renato Dalusi at Branch 20 (recommended bail bond: P432,000), Rolwen Salael at Branch 81 (P300,000), Elmo Irwin del Rosario at Branch 79 (P300,000), Irene Rocos at Branch 84 (P180,000), Jennifer Villar at Branch 79 (P360,000) and Carmela Del Lirio at Branch 20 (P300,000).

Cruz said Raymund posted bail in a case of car theft with homicide filed in 2009 at Branch 11.

While the court recommended no bail, Raymund was allowed to post a P200,000 bail bond after Minerva de Guzman, driver of a Hyundai Starex van she took, are allegedly stole, submitted to the court a letter of desistance, Cruz said.

Roger, who was included in the case, was also allowed to post bail.

Records showed that the van was missing the van of his employer, Dr. Cesar Villanueva, in Malolos City when Raymund allegedly stole the vehicle at gunpoint.

Advice to surrender

Cruz said a review of six theft cases filed against Raymund cases after the De Guzman case.

"So Raymund's lawyer, I advised him to surrender after that case, but he did not want to give himself up," Cruz told the Inquirer on Monday.

"After that incident, all carjack cases and other crimes in Bulacan were attributed to him. These charges have yet to be proven in court."

Raymund, who faces losing robbery charges filed in 2010 by Elizabeth del Rosario (recommended bail bond: P180,000) and Hilary Ann Villasis (P180,000), both in the Bulacan RTC Branch 79.

A case of robbery with violence and intimidation was also filed by Rosie Rosario at Branch 84.

Illegal drugs

A case for illegal drugs was filed against Raymund at Branch 78 in 2007 but been dismissed. Police also filed in 2007 a case against Raymund for possession of illegal drugs at Branch 8. Raymund posted a P200,000 bail in that case.

The Bulacan police also filed a case for illegal gun ban violation against Raymund at Branch 11. The court recommended a bail bond of P216,000.

Raymund also posted a P40,000 bail bond for a theft case filed by Lanaro Rodriguez at Branch 83 last year.

Cruz said he requested Roger to surface and place himself under police custody sometime soon.

Raymund turned himself in on Saturday night, saying he feared for his safety after he was linked to the murder of car dealer Arnaan Evangelista two weeks ago.

Cruz said that before Raymund sought police custody, he was regularly attending the hearings of his pending cases.

No special treatment

Senior Supt. Wendy Rosario, acting Bulacan police director, dismissed speculations that the police had been giving Raymund special treatment.

"He is not a game here. He submitted himself to voluntary surrender because his family feared for his safety," Rosario said.

Raymund, who is in the Bulacan police camp, is not under arrest because the police have yet to receive an order to arrest and detain him, Rosario said.

Oil companies jack up gasoline, diesel prices

From page A1

Last month, fuel prices were up more for a total of P2.25 a liter for gasoline; P2 a liter for diesel; and P1.75 a liter for kerosene.

Rising int'l prices

Shell said the latest oil price increases reflected the upward movement in international fuel prices last week compared with the previous week.

Energy Undersecretary Jose Layug Jr. yesterday confirmed to pioneer that oil companies would have to reflect these increases as prices of diesel based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products had risen by almost $2 a barrel.

Prices of MOPS-based gasoline increased by more than a dollar.

Layug said the price increases were within the energy department's computations.

Formula

A $3 change in MOPS translates into a P1 increase in diesel or kerosene domestic oil prices, according to the energy department's formula.

"Although simplified and easy to calculate, this formula has many assumed variables such that a significant change in any variable will no longer make the formula reliable," the DOE said.

Data from the department showed that the price of Dubai crude averaged $93 a barrel as of Jan. 24, up from last month's $86-a-barrel average.

$100-mark breached

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the MOPS benchmark for refined petroleum products showed that it had breached the $100-a-barrel mark, reaching $107 in the Jan. 1-24 period, up from $110 last December.

MOPS-based diesel prices rose to $109 a barrel from the December 2010 average of $109.

Energy Secretary Jose Rene D. Almendras has insisted that domestic oil prices may continue to rise this year, especially if the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) keeps its current oil production levels.

What demand rises while production remains stable, a tightness in supply may be felt and, most likely, will lead to spikes in crude oil prices, he said.

Smooth sailing

Because the Philippines is dependent on imports to meet its fuel requirements, it is vulnerable to price movements on the global market, Almendras said.

The LTFRB expects smooth sailing as it starts installing its onspot tinting meters on taxis cruise to implement higher fare. Taxis nationwide, except Baguio City, are required to install the new meters.

The flag charge rate will go up to P40 from the current P20, and every succeeding 250 meters will increase in P1.50 from P0.50.

LTFRB Executive Director Danny Delarea said the process was expected to run in an organized manner since the schedule of installation and rerating of meters was based on taxi plate numbers.

He said the agency had put to counter complaints from consumers about overcharging drivers. He added that taxi operators were congregate on the first day of installation and rerating.

Operators' lease mainly refers their daily remittance to the taxi owner, said Delarea and rerating, according to Alvarez.

"Operators automatically find that the already rigorous rerate for them once they do not have to spend for all their taxi units or take them off the streets for re-calibration at the same time," Alvarez said.

Plate numbers

LTFRB public information officer Sonia del Mundo said taxis with plate numbers ending in 1 and 6 are scheduled to get new meters from Jan. 31 to Feb. 14.

The schedule for those with plate numbers ending in 2 and 7 is from Feb. 15 to March 11. The schedule for those with plate numbers ending in 3 and 8 is from March 14 to April 4.

The schedule for those with plate numbers ending in 4 and 9 is from April 5 to May 3. The schedule for those with plate numbers ending in 5 and 0 is from May 3 to May 25.

A total of 25,000 to 28,000 taxi units in Metro Manila and Cebu will get new meters by May 15. Taxis that do not have new interconnect charge higher fare, LTFRB officials said.

Hot line

Taxis that have not installed new meters or do not have receipts to issue have to offer to the current flag down of P28 and an additional P1.50 per succeeding kilometer. Otherwise, passengers may file complaints of overcharging.

Complaints may be referred to the LTFRB hot lines 0921-446-7777, 02-57-391 or 02-66-115.

JUSTICE FOR CO Protesters call on Justice Secretary Leila de Lima to junk the report of the DOJ's fact-finding team clearing the military of culpability in the Nov. 1 killing of broadcaster Leonard Co and nine others in Kalinga, Cagayan.

Co's friends, kin call on De Lima to scrap report

From page A1

Infiesto Carino and Julius Bersamos.

"We just want to ask Secretary De Lima to review the report of the DOJ NBI team," Asuncion told the lawyers.

"She probably did not know that the team she created did something other than what it was supposed to do," she added.

Asuncio said testimonies of two of late brother's companions who survived the shooting clearly contradicted the investigating team's report showing that communist rebels, not the soldiers, killed the writer.

"We are totally stunned by the report of the DOJ-NBI panel. It was full of inconsistencies," she said.

Rally

Bearing placards blaming the military for Co's death, protesters held rally in the Justice for Leonard Co Movement urged De Lima to "junk" the report and to order a reinvestigation of the killing.

Dr. Gerwenil Tupang, Co's friend and the group's convenor, said the panel overlooked that the bullets that killed Co and two of his companions came from the basic ground where members of the New People's Army (NPA) were positioned.

A team organized by Agham, advocates of Science and Technology for the People went to the battlefield of Kalinga, Lepse, where the victims' bullet-riddled bodies were found, to conduct its own "independent investigation," Tupang said.

Higher ground

Tupang, also the head of Agham, said it was impossible for somebody in fire the shot from a position lower than where the victims were standing because the area was "sloping upward."

"The area where the NPAs were supposedly positioned was on a higher ground, not lower as claimed by the DOJ-NBI group," Tupang said.

Tupang said even the survivors of the shooting maintained that they did not see armed men in the area other than soldiers.

"The DOJ-NBI team purposely picked portions of the survivors' testimonies to exonerate the military," he said.

Family raided

An Army spokesperson said the family of Co was being misled by leftist groups into believing that soldiers were to blame for the deaths of Co and two of his companions whom they were caught in a crossfire while doing field work in Lepse.

Col. Antonio Parlade Jr. said the Army had no hand in the DOJ-NBI probe which cleared of that gunfire from NPA killed Co, forest guard Balbiado Cortez and farmer Julius Bersamos.

"The family is being deceived. If they want true justice, they should let him. They should not believe groups with questionable motives," Parlade said.

He said the investigators could not rely solely on the statements of the two survivors, Bontoc Development Corp. president Bonifacio Cabe and farmer Rolbaldo Balisi, who had said that the gunshots came from only one direction.

"There must be a forested area. You cannot determine where the bullets are coming from. Take it from me. I'm also a combat officer. I've been in the field. You cannot tell where the gunshots are coming from," he said.

Open to further probe

Parlade said the Army was open to "further investigation" of gray areas. For one, he said the Army was checking the claim that not all the firearms of the soldiers involved were submitted for ballistics test.

"If they claim only nine firearms were submitted, this won't give us a picture of what happened. If there were allegedly 40 soldiers involved in the incident, all the 40 firearms should have been submitted," he said.

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Pet bunnies in peril as Year of Rabbit nears

SINGAPORE—With just days to go before the Year of the Rabbit dawns, animal welfare groups in Asia are warning of an unfortunate outcome—abandoned and neglected bunnies.

Pet retailers across the region are seeing bold demand for the furry, fast-breeding creatures ahead of the Lunar New Year, which falls on Feb. 3 in the Chinese almanac.

"There's not better time to help rabbits than during the Year of the Rabbit, and you can do so by refusing to support the pet trade that treats so many animals as raffle," said activist Maggie Chiu from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

"Rabbits aren't just cute and fluffy, they're high-maintenance animals who require significant resources, equipment, attention and veterinary care," she added.

Rabbit sales up

As the fear of the Tiger dissipated in China, Thailand's Kalasin Provincial Zoo was quoted by Chinese media as saying.

"They look cute and are easy to care for," the vendor said.

It is exactly such sales pitches that worry animal welfare groups and veterinarians who say bunnies suffer from the misconception that they are easy to maintain.

"Many people buy pets on impulse and do not fully understand the responsibilities of keeping an animal at home," said Jacelyn Hong, president of the bunny-loving group House Rabbit Society Singapore.

"The problem is particularly acute for rabbits because people wrongly assume that they are low-maintenance starter pets for children."

AFP

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INQUIRIES WELCOME

P-Noy the Rat needs Miss Piggy, says seer

From page A1

January is the Year of the Pig, according to renowned feng shui expert Joseph Chiu.

The Hong Kong-based geomancer said in a briefing yesterday at the Mandarin Oriental Manila that this 58-year-old President had "too many fire elements" as he was born in the Month of the Tiger (February) in the Year of the Golden Rat (1960).

Thus, according to Chiu, snowman-with-water-elements—such as someone born in the winter months—would help cool down the nation's most eligible bachelor and lead to his longed-for peace and harmony.

And he just might meet Mr. Right in this Year of the Pig, which is said to be an auspicious one for Pisces like Mr. Aquino.

"Everything tends to be more stable and smooth, especially because there are fairly lucky stars shining bright within the sign. Businessmen will take many opportunities for their business development or expansion. Financially, this is a fortunate year for Pisces. They will have steady income from different sources," Chiu predicted.

Romantic year

On love affairs, Chiu said the Year of the Metal Rabbit was "a romantic year with good marriage possibilities."

"Pisces will enjoy a harmonious relationship with their lovers within the year," he added.

According to Chiu, Pigs are in for a pretty good year when it comes to love affairs. "Those passionately in love should consider getting married within the year. Single Pigs will have chances to meet their dream lover and end up going to church," he said.

It is not only the President's month-to-month love life that holds some cool factors in the coming Year of the Metal Rabbit, according to the feng shui expert.

Chiu, who will spearhead the Mandarin Oriental's New Year festivities for the 10th straight year, said that it would do well for Mr. Aquino to put some water features in his Malacañang office, such as a small fountain or an aquarium (for better decision-making) and his bedroom (to attract more romance.)

No barbecue for the President if he can help it. Again, too much fire, said Chiu, who will formally welcome the Year of the Metal Rabbit at Mandarin Oriental starting 10 p.m. on Feb. 3.

Blue instead of yellow

Chiu likewise recommended that Mr. Aquino sit in the middle of meetings and conferences to make the most of the lucky location of his current office.

He also suggested that the President put his yellow clothes in the closet for the meantime and bring out the light blue, which should bring him more luck this year.

It is also not advisable for Mr. Aquino to buy himself a Rolex watch. "Too much fire elements," Chiu said. An Omega would be better, one with a round face, not square.

The Year of the Metal Rabbit promises to be a generally good year for the Philippines, which was born in the Year of the Earth Dog.

Chiu said that there was room for growth for the economy and that 2011 would be especially good for businesses with metal and wood elements, such as those engaged in auto, jewelry, banking, publishing and gas needs.

Good for business

According to Chiu, the Rabbit is a rewarding sign. That means not just a better love life for many Filipinos but also businesses attracting more clients.

Because metal is associated with the mouth, Filipinos who make a living out of using their mouth, such as singers, actors and public speakers, even politicians, should have a good year ahead, according to Chiu.

He added that it would likewise be a good year for those into trading, mining and tourism which, according to the feng shui expert, the Philippines should aggressively develop to take advantage of the not-so-good economic prospects in neighboring Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand.

To achieve prosperity, Chiu counseled those born with good old-fashioned hard work, Chiu advised.

"The Year of the Metal Rabbit is a year of prosperity. But if you're lazy, nothing will happen," he said.

Obet L. Engracia, 54

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2 boats in fuel smuggle seized

THE BUREAU of Customs (BOC) has seized two boats caught smuggling P60 million worth of bunker fuel at Manila's North Harbor.

Commissioner Angelito Alvarez ordered the seizure after members of the BOC-Iron Silver The Smugglers Program caught crew members of the MV Chelsea pumping oil into the MT China Treasure on Jan. 17, causing the government to lose P30 million in revenues.

"We've received so many reports about [the smuggling of] oil... This is the first time we caught someone so I am happy," Alvarez said yesterday.

He said bunker fuel could be transferred [to] ships only in foreign ships. If it is meant only for domestic vessels, duties would have to be paid, he said.

"But in this case, they did not show any evidence that they had paid their duties and taxes, and so clearly this is a smuggling case," he added.

The smugglers were tipped off by an informant and arrested with the help of seven [customs] personnel provided by Asia Pethrogen, acting director of the Customs Enforcement and Security Service. Philip C. Fabros

THE DAILY GOSPEL

JANUARY 25 (Tuesday)
Feast: Project
Conversion of Paul
Jr 1:17; Ps. 2
Go out to all the world, and tell the Good News.

Let Reading: Acts 22:3-16 [or Acts 9:1-22]*

And said, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up here in this city where I was educated at the school of Gamaliel, according to the strict observance of our law. And I was dedicated to God's service, as are all of you today. ...

"The High Priest and the whole Council of elders can bear witness to this. ...But as I was nearing Damascus, at about noon a great light from the sky suddenly flashed about me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me: 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' I answered: 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said to me: 'I am Jesus the Nazarene whom you persecute.' The men who were with me saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of the one who was speaking to me. I asked: 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord replied: 'Get up and go to Damascus; there you will be told all that you are destined to do.' So the brightness of that light had blinded me and as I was led by the hand into Damascus by my companions.

"There a certain Ananias came to me. He was a devout observer of the Law and well spoken of by all the Jews who are living there, so he stood by me, he said: 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' At that moment I could see and I looked at him. He then said, 'The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see the Just One and to hear the words from his mouth. From now on you shall be his witness before all the pagan people and tell them all that you have seen and heard. And now, why delay? Get up and be baptized and have your sins washed away by calling upon his Name.'"

Gospel: Mk 16:15-18

Jesus said his disciples, "Go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News to all creation. The one who believes and is baptized will be saved, the one who refuses to believe will be condemned. Signs like these will accompany those who have believed: in my Name they will cast out demons and speak new languages; they will pick up snakes and, if they drink anything poisonous, they will be unharmed. They will lay their hands on the sick and they will be healed."

Reflection:

Jesus sends out only the priests and bishops and religious but us, the disciples, not only to preach but [to] perform miracles: to cast out demons, the crown and cure, in the day and the night, in the whole universe—to proclaim the Good News! We are sent to cast out the demons of hatred and rejection and speak the language of compassion and understanding, and to bring reconciliation and healing to our land.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
OPINION

UST's staying power

EDITORIAL

FILIPINOS MAY smile their breast for their show more fervor and notoriously "tongue cogent" attitude, negative traits that hamper their efforts at unity and authentic nation-building; but they don't have to look far for inspiring examples of visionary enterprise, sense of mission and commitment to it, along with resilience, tenacity, and sheer staying power. This week the University of Santo Tomas for-

mally starts its year-long celebration of its 400th anniversary as Asia's oldest university, and whether one is an alumnus or not, one must join in the thanksgiving for, as UST Rector Magnificus Fr. Rolando V. de la Rosa, O.P., put it, UST has indeed been a "gift" to the Philippine nation.

It is a gift because for a people unsure about their national identity and bereft of institutions to reflect their worth and pride as a people, UST has been a paragon of institution-building. Older than the Philippine republic and practically the oldest institution in the country after the Roman Catholic Church, UST is the alma mater of the founders of the Philippine nation (Jose Burgos, Jose Rizal, Apolinario Mabini, Emilio Jacinto, Felipe Agoncillo and nearly all the framers of the Malolos Constitution) as well as of four presidents: Diosdado L. Quezon, Sergio Osmeña, Jose P. Laurel and Diosdado Macapagal), and of patriots and nationalists (Claro M. Recto and Fernando Ma. Guerrero), several Supreme Court chief justices, jurists and lawmakers.

UST was founded by the intrepid Dominican order. The small seed that was to become UST was sown on the death-bed of the third archbishop of Manila, the Dominican friar Miguel de Benavides who, before dying in 1603, bequeathed his personal library and his meager personal fortune of 1,000 Spanish pesos for the establishment of a college-seminary for the training of priests. It was only ten years later that his Dominican confreres were able to gather enough extra donors and start the college.

Starting as a school for the sacred sciences, UST later branched out to the civil disciplines as much as that today UST sports proudly all of the superlative titles as far as age is concerned—oldest law school, oldest medical school, oldest school of pharmacy and of other health services, oldest journalism school.

Of course, it has become a cliché to call UST "older than Harvard," a tag invented not by the Dominicans but by the American governor-general, Cameron Forbes who wanted to encourage every Spanish-based institution in the Philippines based on Anglo-American pattern/ide.

Some critics pigeonhole UST as a Spanish colonial relic that hasn't kept up with the times. But even the Jesuit American historian John Schumacher has noted that the quality of education provided by UST in the Spanish period was comparable to that of Europe, else how could Rizal and the other Filipinos who continued their studies there have adjusted very well to the European curriculum? But how could UST have given the Church the Dominican theologian Gelerino Geronimo, who became archbishop of Toledo and primate of the Spanish church, and also become the adviser of Pope Leo XIII in the ecumenical revival of Thomism in the late 19th century? Else how could UST have provided Europe the Dominican thinkers Norberto Prado and Francisco Marín Sola, who occupied one after the other the theology chair of the University of Fribourg and who became top theologians of the first half of the 20th century?

Moreover, while Harvard is heavily subsidized, UST is not. In fact, it has not historically received any subsidy—not from the Spanish monarchy or colonial establishment, not from the Americans, and not from the Philippine republic. Despite all this, UST is, according to the Professional Regulation Commission, the best performing private school in licensure exams and the biggest provider of Filipino professionals. Among private schools, too, it has the highest number of programs declared as Centers of Excellence and Centers of Development by the Commission on Higher Education.

Amid the vicissitudes of history, UST has forged on, with its overriding vision of Christian humanism and Thomist optimism, which looks at nature and everything as reliable and hints of grace. But when one looks today at UST's sprawling campus in Manila—with its classic neo-Angelo-proof Main Building, its two hospitals, one of which is the biggest private charity hospital in the country, and its magnificent art-deco church—one enters into contact with a sight not Thomistic, but Augustinian: it is the vision of the City of God on earth. It is a vision that all Filipinos should aspire to.

Happy birthday, Unit!

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Backyard face

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

There were gauges...extreme deprivation, gross disparities and inequalities—as ranked in to the year's edition.

PHDR measured parallel efforts "in search of a human face." They added a "Human Poverty Index." This measures deprivation in essential income. Life expectancy is measured with adults on "probability at birth of not surviving to age 40."

Knowledge is gauged not merely by enrollments. They're supplemented by adult literacy and gender-sensitive PHDRs survey percentages of people who think boys space, needs cannibalized welfare-underwrought-like below it.

Students slumps to No. 72 out of 77 provinces in "Human Poverty" Perspective (ranks No. 8 Southwest Tawi-Tawi). Its poor numbers shore up some national disparities. La Union, for example, now has the longest life expectancy at 74.6 years. Life is "nasty, brutish and short" in Tawi-Tawi at 33.4 years.

Surfers reported also computer (ICTs) between countries and provinces. Developed on one end and Paraguay on the other, for instance, underscore Basilan, Laguna, Bataan, Batangas, La Union and Pampanga."

"In Search of a Human Face" updates issues that worried PHDR's forebear. The 1990 report on gender discriminated gains, by women, in education, jobs and elections—and contraception. The 2000 report focused on erosion in the quality of urbanization and climate change.

The 2002 report deals with "Work and Well Being." Its chapters signal a logical progression dealt with "Human Security and Armed Conflict." The 2006 theme dealt with how narcotics and politics impact on human development.

The new tools are "a major step ... to what has been characterized as a 'brain destructive'" national scientist Gloria Castillo wrote. "If we make this move we may not see Philippine human development, what would be the story like and images?"

For an answer, Castillo whips out a subtle chart, compares a glacial Senegaet with a Maguindanao-bloodied by massacres, capped its mortal toll. Senegal's dismal (2006) average and doubled with 34 incentive dropouts nameless.

Functional illiteracy in Maguindanao is four times that of Benguet. Pitiful's and high-school enrollments in Benguet, as 64 percent, investigators Maguindanao's 171 persons. Only four out of 10 Maguindanaoans get high school diplomas. Benguet has double that.

Almost half (46 percent) of Maguindanaoan homes draw water from murky wells. Stark that against the 1.9 percent in Benguet. Thus, a Maguindanaoan's life expectancy (57 years), similar to cameo did flee to overseas, Benguet in Benguet approximates that of Cebu.

As a result, overall HDI tables the 77 provinces several Benguet to sixt his. *E. magindanaoan* Lanao is second to the last.

"Ethnic in our country live, on average, almost a generation longer than the poor," the late national scientist Mamerto Canoy would say 20 years back. "Many ask the future—but fatefind—question: Have the affluent acquired a monopoly on time?"

PHDR has not addressed (so far) "the hidden environment of absolute control by those in power over local populace, with support of the highest armed authority," Jr. Castillo points out. Thirteen years ago, Canoy grew in on "survival keys." The daily lives of citizens are "where the human face must shine more ... Can we find living indicators?"

Will policymakers use these new indices? For now, the results make an expose what the report may, or a 1958 film classic, with the Frankfurt. Time says all hombre, "We have the face of hunger."

* * *

Email: jmercado.mail@gmail.com

Not very grand

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

CHIEF JUSTICE Renato Corona has a complaint. There's a smear campaign against his Court, he told the foreign correspondents last week, the doesn't know recently attacks behind it. "All I know is there are people who (have gone) out of their way to disparage the decisions of the Supreme Court."

When the Court decides a case, it neither answers to the executive department nor, more ominously, to the legislature. It answers to the power of a co-equal branch of government, United Separately, the Court does not wield the power of the sword, nor does it have the power of the purse. It has the power to interpret the Constitution .... I think there is a misinformation out there that we must convince of the rightness of a decision and the need to misunderstand with them, the reasons why we arrived that way to that result."

This reminds me of the way the Department of Education wanted to use unprofessional terms in the public school teachers way back in the early 1990s. The teller was clearly a plot against government, the educators officials said, and they had asked the law enforcement agencies to hunt down its instigators. I said then that the less information agencies might have trouble hunting down the instigators of the teller because they themselves would be among them. I said the same thing now. Among them, Poverty, Hunger and Injustice. The public school teachers themselves said they had replaced the catechism as the country's primary basis of hardship.

I say the same thing now. The Supreme Court may have trouble identifying the instigators of the smear campaign against it because those instigators have no patriotism of addresses and go by many aliases. Among them, Cebu senator Senate, Basic Secretary and dictator. The people themselves see the Court's decisions as they are and ask why, and see the Court's decisions as they can be and ask why the hell not.

I am one of those who have disparaged those decisions, and am very considerably that one day with being convinced about their rightness, or indeed why the Supreme Court has acted the way and the way I would be very interested for example to know what, to us, light about sex advising one of its own justices to resign after he was shown to testify to have plagiarized several basic texts opinion about a legal principle. It may have perverted that principle to argue against the author's intent. Who was of course Antonio Martinez de Castillo and about a case that had to do with his conduct women. Did Castillo did not just write Noah Webster's arguments word for word, an argument that said the state was duty-bound to take up the case of the author's wife, so he used it to dismiss the author's women's petitioner's.

More than that, I would be very interested to know what is or right not just about not asking one of its own to resign for unacceptable behavior but going to ask the DP gentlemen who exposed the standard so those cause why they should not be held to be contempt. The first was bad enough, the second is just mind-boggling, it adds whole new dimensions to the phrase "intrinsic and extrinsic." Can they be by a statutory private trust of judgment?

If this were a time and without case, the Supreme Court might be excused for expressing temporary's bearing however in wide matters. It hard to oversee a more big for almost a generation one. But that system clung by the span of less than a year with such Supreme Court's decisions as: upholding the midnight appointments, refusing to reinvite the Hacienda case, and dismissing the Truth Commission. That is no longer an accident, that is a pattern. That makes the Court itself the very issue it says that needs answering—if or all it wants as to be.

The new tools are "a major step ... to what has been characterized as a 'brain destructive'" national scientist Gloria Castillo wrote. "If we make this move we may not see Philippine human development, what would be the story like and images?"

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* * *

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Avoiding an 'Empty PDP'

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

DEJU UPON a time—during the famous pandemic in 1982, PDP, specifically—it fell on my destiny to lead the work of formulating the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP). This document is considered to be the country's development "bible," the guiding blueprint for all the country's development strategy over the six-year period coinciding with the term of a president. As such, it is seen to embody the incumbent leadership's vision, goals and strategies for social and economic transformation, reflecting the views of its people, assembling every socially relevant problem it expected to unroll soon after taking office.

But as a nation that prides itself in being democratic, we cannot have an MTPDP that just emboded the president-elect's dreams, plans and programs. Thus, the elected president's campaign platform document must not, and does not automatically turn into the nation's development blueprint, as the saying goes, be about his least-only those who elected him. Rather, it must reflect the views of the development as a shared endeavor for every single Filipino. And unless all citizens own their leader enough to the point of joining him dream for their and choose for himself how to pursue those dreams, then prospects for the country's long-term development may not be as bright as they could be.

Here where participation is not the same as consultation. It is one thing to write a draft plan for interest at the causes and then bring it around for people's comments and suggestions, with no intention of incorporating the bulk. It is quite another to begin by asking the people what their dreams and aspirations are, with no express view to express their dreams and aspirations, another thought on how these might be

achieved. The value of such exercise lies in obtaining a wide variety of viewpoints, often partial, big unexpected new insights that may not even occur to the most seasoned planner; I have been humbled countless times with wisdom coming from the humble of us (those citizens, especially poor Filipinos in the countryside) representing needs that turn out to be very different from what government has presumed to provide them.

There are, after all, no one-size-fits-all solutions in a country marked by such wide diversity. And planners need to be creative enough in the design of such diversity in order to unroll really viable-value solutions that are likely too to work in many contexts. For this reason, the first inputs participatory planning is not writing, but listening, and learning as people tell their stories in their own terms. For our planning to draw in a small group—as many low-technology consensus or highly capitalized—presenting to "plan food" for the rest of the people. The essence of participatory planning is ensuring that the diverse range of experiences and sentiments is expressed, and captured. And doing all this right takes time, which means that meaningful and effective development planning simply cannot be rushed.

Understandably, the Aquino administration in her feeling rushed by certain sectors—investment managers, credit rating agencies, international development and donor institutions, many in the business sector, to name a few—to draw up its development plan. Hence the Public-Private Task Force, a Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), the agency tasked with shepherding the MTPDP formulation, is in such driven to rush the process at the expense of meaningful participation and ownership by the various stakeholders in society. The major civil society networks involved in the process have actively lamented the manner by which Pnoy's MTPDP is being formulated, which they believe defies his call for active citizen participation in governance.

Some would have avoided this problem had it embarked on the early stages of the process well before the election by, obviously, at least three years previous plans. Preparatory work for the Ramos MTPDP (1993-1998), for example, was already underway a good 18 months before the elections that were how the presidency. But circumstances changed with the presidency. But circumstances changed with the presidency. But circumstances changed with

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P-Noy breaking 'militia vow'

LETTERS

OUR AMNESTY group UBU in Germany has written letters on human rights concerns in Israel, Cambodia, China, Burundi, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Nepal, Kazakhstan, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala and Chad.

When I call attention to human rights abuses by militias, paramilitary groups and private armies. Everyone would agree with me that the authorities have the power to investigate examine under due has had power emancipation for human rights in the Philippines? So far, however, former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Executive Order No. 546 has not been rescinded. This 2006 presidential order directs the Philippine National Police to provide active support to the military in counterinsurgency operations, including deputizing militias and civilian volunteer organizations (CVOs) as "force multipliers."

The full impact of the government's state support for the private armed groups of local politicians became readily clear on Nov. 23, 2009, when 57 people traveling in an election convoy were massacred in Maguindanao. Since then, former Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan Sr., members of his family and state-private army have been arrested and charged in connection with the killings. Many members of his private army were part of CVOs, which the government had established and armed.

The system of militarization for armed groups which are then used as private armies in states knows.

After the Maguindanao massacre, then Senator Benigno Aquino III and Mar Roxas issued a statement demanding the "immediate revocation of Executive Order No. 546." On April 22, over the end of his presidential campaign, Mr. Aquino said, "Our security forces must be directed to dismantle all private armies." Although now commander in chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, President Aquino has yet to translate his words into action by disbanding and disarming those groups. Before the President's election, his party renounced as part of its platform: "The dismantlement and to establish the conditions for a genuine human rights regime in the country." In his first 100 days, however, the President failed to make human rights an immediate priority.

At losing his father, President Aquino has personal experience of a grave human rights violation and is now in a position where he can help protect the human rights of all Filipinos.

—FREDERICK EDEL
Group UBU, Amnesty International

Thompson Hardware disowns footwear shipment

THOMPSON HARDWARE & Lighting Center has been recently dragged into the reported seizure by the Bureau of Customs of an alleged grossly undervalued shipment of branded footwear worth P1.2 million.

As the owner of Thompson Hardware & Lighting Center, I and the company vehemently deny that we have imported and/or caused the importation of that shipment.

We have no knowledge regarding the shipment and we have not involved into any scheme/agreement pertaining to the same.

We have never commissioned any person, individual or entity to create and/or facilitate the importation of grossly undervalued footwear, as in fact, we are not engaged in any shoe business. We are in the lighting and hardware business, and also the records of the auction[illegible] with the Bureau of Customs would show that it has not in any manner involved itself in any fraudulent schemes, connections and/or practices.

The company's name was unlawfully, recently and surreptitiously used, without our knowledge, consent and/or approval, in the fraudulent importation of footwear, which the company hereby strongly and firmly denounces and condemns.

In relation to all of the foregoing and for purposes of clearing its name, Thompson Hardware & Lighting Center has already filed, on Jan. 13, 2011, the necessary affidavit before the Law Division of the Bureau of Customs.

—BENJAMIN LIM,
owner/proprietor,
Thompson Hardware & Lighting Center

If Inquirer.net columnists, [illegible] opinion about the treatment of news and [illegible] in the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Alexandra streets, City of Makati or send a fax to 896-8793, 897-8703, 897-8704, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Assistant Editor Tony Benjamin

Across the NATION

DENR orders closure of 29 dumps

CITY of San Fernando—On the order of Environment Secretary Ramon Paje, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Environmental Management Bureau (DENR-EMB) in Central Luzon on Monday will close starting Jan. 27 the open or controlled dumps of 29 local governments in Bulacan and Pampanga.

In copies of notices of closure, DENR regional director Ricardo Calderon said the 29 local governments have failed to comply with Republic Act No. 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act).

Former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who now represents the second district of Pampanga in the House of Representatives, signed the law 10 years ago. The law prohibits open dumps.

EMB regional director Lormelyn Claudio said in a separate memorandum that the 29 local governments "failed to truly demonstrate the will to close the existing open and controlled dumpsites."

Out for closure in Bulacan are dumps in Angat, Balagtas, Baliuag, Bulacan, Bustos, Hagonoy, Norzagaray, Pandi, Pulilan, San Ildefonso, San Miguel and San Rafael.

In Pampanga, ordered closed were dumps in the cities of Angeles and San Fernando and the towns of Arayat, Floridablanca, Guagua, Mabalacat, Macabebe, Magalang, Sasmuan, Mexico, Minalin, Porac, San Luis, San Simon, San Ana and San Tomas.

Too long to wait

At least 261 local governments in the country have violated RA 9003, reports released by the National Solid Waste Management Council in the Office of the Ombudsman showed.

Many local governments in Central Luzon have resorted to disposing of various wastes in landfills operated by the Metro Clark Waste Management Corp. in Barangay Sabangan in Capas, Tarlac, or in San Jose del Monte City in Bulacan.

"Ten years is too long [to be waiting for corrective measures]," Claudio said.

Paje said Mayor Oscar Rodriguez said the city government was waiting for the installation of Biosphere, a private partner that converts garbage into energy sources.

He said the processing and facilities have been installed near the Lua dump. "Stored there now are residuals or remains of segregated garbage not convertible into organic or cash, which we will feed into the Biosphere facility," he said.

The Mt. Pinatubo Emergency Project Management Office in Pampanga presented to lawyers and Gov. Lilia Pineda to become a copy of the "soft component" of the Pinatubo Urgent Mitigation Project (UMP) II, a P18.4-billion set of interlocking interwoven dams mostly on a loan from the Japanese government.

Erwin Oreijas, Inquirer Central Luzon

ALWAY FOG
A fog envelops the stretch of the Pan-Philippine Highway in Ligao City, Albay, in early morning of Jan. 25.

Town cop chief, 4 others killed

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The police chief of Rizal town in Cagayan province, and four other policemen were killed on Sunday when suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels ambushed them in the remote Barangay of Bura, police reports on Monday said.

Chief Insp. Francisco Jose Villanueva, Cagayan Valley police director, said Insp. Antonio Bueno, Rizal police chief, his wife, SPO2 Merejane Bueno, brother PO2 Hermilito Bueno, PO2 Jose Bagayatat, and PO1 Jessy Jimenez, were killed when their car hit a land mine and was fired upon by 70 suspected NPA rebels at past 3 p.m. on Sunday.

Villanueva said two other policemen—SPO1 Elmer Lacsa and PO1 Valiant Bustamante—were wounded.

He said the policemen were on their way to the police headquarters in this Cagayan capital, more than 60 kilometers from Rizal, to attend the commencement exercises of their police promotion on Monday.

Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo is scheduled to issue posthumous awards today to the Rizal police chief, his wife and the rest of the fatalities.

"Taxpayers' money will be used for pension when he was murdered. It is embarrassing for us and his family. My condolences also go to the bereaved families. They all died as heroes. They deserve to be given the Department of Interior and Local Government's posthumous awards," Robredo said in a telephone interview.

Before he died, Inspector was able to contact policemen in the Cagayan police office to report the ambush, Villanueva said.

He said members of the 109th Infantry Battalion Command operating in Cagayan were initiated the attack. The rebels were armed with M-16 and M-14 rifles. Fellector Vhejon Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

Pagbilao mayor wants part in realty tax talks

LUCENA CITY—Mayor Nestor Portes of Pagbilao, Quezon, the host municipality of the 735-megawatt coal-fed power plant, has insisted that the municipal government should be involved in the negotiations on the amicable settlement of the P6-billion unpaid real estate tax of the plant operator.

Portes complained that the local government of Pagbilao was being kept in the dark over the reported compromise agreement being worked out by President Aquino and Quezon Gov. David Suarez to prevent the scheduled auction of the plant property on Jan. 26.

"What is that compromise agreement? I don't understand that. We know nothing about it. I only heard the news over the radio and newspapers," Portes said in an interview on Monday.

He added that the rightful authority on the collection of taxes is the municipality of Pagbilao. "That's my view under the law."

The 300-hectare power plant, which is being run by Japanese-controlled Team Energy (TE) Corp., lies at Ibis Grande in Barangay Ilaguen, Pagbilao.

Last week, Malacañang announced that President Aquino and Suarez had agreed to come up with a compromise deal in settling the P6-billion real estate tax liabilities of the owner and operator of the facility.

The reported arrangement involved the plan of the Quezon government to auction the power plant to recoup the unpaid taxes owed by the plant owner.

Mohsen Lotfipur, Suarez's executive assistant, said there was still no substantial development on the collection of the plant's unpaid taxes.

"There is nothing to report yet [to Mayor Portes]," Lotfipur said.

In an earlier interview, Suarez said the purported compromise agreement was still being prepared for consideration with all concerned parties and "all issues are being tackled and considered."

"We yield to the wisdom of President Aquino regarding the preservation of the auction, however, all parties should arrive at an acceptable proposal before 8th 9. That's the final date," Suarez said in a text message to the Inquirer.

But Portes is puzzled with the reported compromise deal which is now being worked out at the national level.

Under the Local Government Code, real estate taxes to be distributed as follows: 30 percent to be divided equally by the local government and the provincial government for their respective school funds; the other 50 percent to be divided by the host municipality, local government unit and provincial government.

Portes has made it clear that the main basis of his administration is still to collect the unpaid taxes owed by the plant operator.

He stressed that the local government of Pagbilao would not be a hostage person for the current year unless the plant operator settles its tax liabilities.

However, he admitted that stopping the plant operation would not be easy for the local government.

The electricity generated from Pagbilao power plant accounts for around 20 percent of the total power generating capacity in Luzon, Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Gov denies involvement in journalist's slay

DIGOS CITY—Davao del Sur Gov. Douglas Cagas maintained his innocence over allegations he ordered the killing of a former journalist here last year.

Cagas said he was forced to respond anew after the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) came out with a statement last week that tagged him as the mastermind in the June 2010 killing of Nestor Bedolido.

Bedolido, called "Tiger Nestor," which Cagas published. He later had a falling out with the governor.

Salvador Mendoza, the self-confessed gunman, said it was Cagas and Matanao Mayor Douglas Cagas who had Bedolido killed.

Fernandez also denied a hand in the killing.

"Inasmuch as my political enemies have launched a massive smear campaign against me, alleging in divergent groups/guards as up to mislead the media in assuming as facts, certain information that are untrue, allow me to respond to the allegations of a certain 'Salvador Mendoza,' Cagas, in a written statement released Friday said.

He denied knowing Mrs. Bedolido and his brother, Henry who also allegedly participated in the Bedolido slaying.

Cagas said on the date that he supposedly met Mendoza here, he was not in the province.

"I was in Metro Manila from the afternoon of June 14, 2010 until the morning of June 20. I have the ticket, boarding pass and SM certification to prove the details of the flights which I boarded," he said.

Cagas said he was attending the Mandatory Continuing Legal Education seminar for lawyers in Manila on the day the self-confessed killer supposedly met with him here.

"During the open forum where I mentioned myself before I spoke, the former even asked me why I bothered to attend the MCLE when I was not a practicing lawyer. I answered him that I was in the service of a volunteer cause because my legal training is getting rusty," he said.

"For a person to travel to Digos City, Davao del Sur from Metro Manila, he has to be in the airport 45 minutes before the flight, which means that I have to travel three my house in Samsan, Quezon City to the airport before that," he said in adding that it was impossible for him to fly home in time for the supposed talk with Mrs. Fernandez.

Cagas also appealed to the NUJP to check its facts as he maintained that Bedolido was not a practicing journalist.

The NUJP in Davao said Bedolido is being a journalist or not may not be the issue here.

"It is not for Cagas to tell us whether Bedolido was a journalist or not. The facts about Bedolido's work as a journalist have long been established," the NUJP said.

The group said Cagas should answer the charges and not waste time in refuting Bedolido's work as a journalist, Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao

BICOL MEDICAL CENTER

INVITATION TO BID

Police tag driver, 4 others in killing of judge

LIGAO CITY—Investigators have identified a driver and four other people as suspects in the killing of Bacon Sorsogon Judge Redentor Delgado in his house in Darmayan town on Jan. 19.

Bicol State police director Supt. Marlon Chan said Nanette Padilla, the judge's driver, and his companions Hernan Guiza, Jessie Mendoza, Herlander Gusmao and Hendel Bandoy are the ones drinking with Delgado in his house on the night before his body was discovered.

Pingoy, 51, was found dead with a dashed throat and stab wounds early Monday of Jan. 19 by Padilla, who went to the victim's house to report for work. Pingoy was living alone in his house in Darmayan.

Pingoy was judge of the regional trial court Branch 3 in Laoag City and the municipal circuit trial court in Bacon town.

Chan said Padilla is now the lone suspect in custody after he raised inconsistent accounts of his whereabouts on the night of the murder.

"He is considered the prime suspect in the murder," he said.

Chan, however, said the police were gathering more evidence against the suspects who were released from the police's custodial investigation on Jan. 20.

He said investigators both operation units plan to turn the suspects for laboratory testing.

The suspects, he said, voluntarily submitted to police custody and issued their statements on their whereabouts on the night of the murder.

He said the police were looking at three possible motives into the victim's murder, land dispute between family members and cases that Pingoy was handling. Cristina Arandela, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Editor Teddyboy B. Molmisares
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Chiong

SPORTS

SKILLED: Pacifico

PBA ballclub owners in crucial meeting today

By Nassrey B. Cuerdo

IN A RARE gathering of the who's who in the business and basketball world, owners of Philippine Basketball Association teams were today to tackle several talkish issues and dust the league's direction.

Business tycoon Manny V. Pangilinan and food and beverage conglomerate president Ramon S. Ang, owners of several teams in Asia's first play-for-pay league, will join the rest of the attendees at the two-gathering of league bigwigs at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel at noon.

Billionaire Alaska owner Wilfred Steven Uytengsu also confirmed his attendance to the meeting, marking the first time in quite a long while that the owners themselves come face-to-face to talk about where the PBA is headed.

Pangilinan, who owns Talk 'N' Text and Meralco, and Ang of San Miguel Corp.'s Ginebra San Miguel, Barangay Ginebra and Derby Ace, will join Uytengsu, Alfrito Bert Lina, Coca-Cola's Jose Ibazeta Bayhon, Rain or Shine's Terry Que and Rajamahal Pe and Barako Bull's George Chua in the session.

Up for discussion are the proposed Developmental League, the construction of the PBA's own coliseum, the league's role in the national team and the search for a new television partner.

"I expect specific and definitive resolutions and directions to be arrived at by the team owners in the meeting," said commissioner Chito Salud.

"This meeting is something I have been looking forward to. The team owners have not met for quite sometime. This is certainly going to be positive for the league."

Salud, whose father, the eminent lawyer Rudy, also served the PBA as commissioner, still presents a blueprint for the D-League to representatives of the owners in the meeting.

The D-League could provide the PBA with a tournament that would pave the way for the transition of players from the college ranks.

An age limit of 17 to 26 years old for players from the collegiate ranks and the five-agree rookie will be proposed. Once one local player will be required to see action in the D-League for at least two years before they become eligible for the PBA Draft.

The owners will also decide on the request of the national team Smart Gilas to participate in the coming Commissioner's Cup, as well as Barako Bull's request for a one-conference break to be able to give its side to the Nationals.

Streaking So nails solo lead with 4th win

GRAND MASTER Nicolas So has won four straight matches since the first tournament break after the fourth round.

Gilas five eyes No. 2 vs Syrians

PH Azkals get full ABS-CBN backing

By Cindell B. Tupas

San Miguel needs an urgent heart check

BARE EYE

Alcuin Tirtolaid

St. Clare cue aces keep B-League top spot

Martinez top BWAA fighter over Pacquiao

WORLD MIDDLEWEIGHT champion Jerrin Martinez was named fighter of the year over pound-for-pound king Manny Pacquiao by the prestigious Boxing Writers Association of America Monday.

MARTINEZ

Martinez, who will be promoted with the rogue Ana Robinson Trophy, was cited for scoring two huge wins in 2010 against the IWBAA which will him to honorees during its annual banquet tentatively scheduled May 6 in Las Vegas.

Pacquiao, who achieved an incredible eight of eight world titles in eight different weight divisions last year, was second in the balloting by the organization's membership followed by fourweight champion Wladimir Klitschko, junior flyweight champion Giovani Segura and super middleweight titlist Andre Ward.

Pacquiao trainer Freddie Roach maintained his perennial position as "Trainer of the Year," winning the award for the third time in a row and fifth overall.

The award is named after his late mentor Eddie Futch, who was in Manila as trainer of Joe Frazier for the heavyweight title fight against Muhammad Ali at the Araneta Coliseum in October 1975.

WBA light welterweight champion Amir Khan, who was pushed to the limit in winning a unanimous 12-round decision over Marcos Maidana last December, shared the "Ali Premium" award for "Fight of the Year."

Khan trained alongside Pacquiao while the Filipino champ prepared for his recent WBC light middleweight/super welterweight title fight against Antonio Margarito last November at the Dallas Cowboys Stadium in Texas.

Pacquiao polverized Margarito to win by a 12-round shutout. —Ronnie Mallbentelia

PETRA Kvitova of the Czech Republic makes a backhand return to Italy's Flavia Pennetta during their fourth round match. AP

Nadal, Murray reach q'finals

MELBOURNE—Top seed Rafael Nadal pummeled Canada's Mauro Cilic into submission with a brutal 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 victory in reach the Australian Open quarterfinals on Monday.

Nadal's win makes the Melbourne Bowl, light kept alive the world number one's bid to become only the third man, and first since 1969, to hold all four grand slam titles at once.

The Spaniard looked for sharper than in his first three matches, handing to share down both and rifling it from back past 11th seed Cilic, before striking his trademark gamethrower's pose with a following cry of "Aaaaa!"

The first set was over in a blur for Cilic, a strong dash for Nadal as he attempted to drag it out too-to-toe, only to get passed time and again by the 2009 champion.

Nadal took the second by forcing Cilic into another wild forehand and backhand over the finish line when his shattered opponent dumped a second entire halfway up the net after two hours and 11 minutes.

Andy Murray also cruised out another impressive thrashing into his quarterfinal showdown with Andrei Soderling failed to materialize after Alexandr Dolgopolov shocked the Swede.

Murray and Soderling have been jockeying for fourth place in the world rankings but while the British fifth seed scored close in his 6-2, 6-3, 6-3 humbling of Juergen Melzer, fourth seed Soderling was sent packing, 1-6, 6-3, 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 by the Ukrainian.

Second seed Nita Ivanovic continued her march through the women's draw with a 6-4, 6-1 victory over wounded Serra Bouchard to set up a last night meeting with another Czech Petra Kvitova, who ground down Italian Flavia Pennetta, 3-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Losing finalist here last year, Murray had conceded just 16 games in three matches to reach the fourth round and was equally unimpressive in dispatching frustrated Austrian Melzer in just 104 minutes on a sun-baked Rod Laver Arena.

"I'm not expecting to go through the rest of the tournament winning matches like that, with that score line," said Murray. "I'm ready for that eventuality when it does get tough."

Another young gun who is starting to go through the draw ended when seventh seed of Israel Ivory patiently saw off Canadian qualifier Mike Rhodes, 6-4, 6-2, 0-3, 6-4.

Aggravaka Radwanska have brought an end to Ying Ying's run at the year's first major quarters, edging the unseeded Chinese, 7-5, 3-6, 7-5.

The Pole will meet the winner of the match between three-time US Open champion Kim Clijsters and Ekaterina Makarova in the quarterfinals. Reuters

Abu Dhabi win lifts Kaymer past Tiger Woods as No. 2

ABU DHABI—Tiger Woods is not even No. 2 in the golf rankings.

He has dropped to No. 3 after Martin Kaymer won in Abu Dhabi and overtook him for the No. 2 spot. Lee Westwood is No. 1.

Kaymer has been No. 3 but advanced by winning the European Tour event by eight strokes in his first tournament this year.

Woods begins his 2011 season Thursday at Torrey Pines in San Diego.

Kaymer said "we'll see how long it takes him to overtake me again."

Master champion Phil Mickelson dropped to a No. 5 ranking. He had been sharing fourth with US Open champ Graeme McDowell, who tied for third in Abu Dhabi.

Mickelson finished 25th Sunday. He says he doesn't dwell on the rankings and is concentrating on the upcoming majors. AP

Nuggets dump Pacers

DENVER—Carmelo Anthony gave the home crowd nothing to boo about Sunday scoring 36 points in the Denver Nuggets' 123-107 victory over the Indiana Pacers, who lost their fifth straight. With game.

Anthony had been subjected to jeers by the home crowd as trade talk intensified last week, but on this night, the former Syracuse star showed him appreciated when he was cutting triples from all over the court as he put on a spectacular 23-point show in the third quarter.

Anthony's career-best 46 finished victory was the third period as the Nuggets incited a close game into a comfortable victory—a reversal of their game in November when the Pacers made their first 20 shots in the fourth quarter and rallied to a 116-113 win to hand. snapshin. AP

Bermudez best among PH wakeboard bets

By Jasmine P. Payo

BILL, CAMARINES SUR—A teenBandana was clinched the crown for women's wakeboard in the national wakeboard title awarded in Philippine discover in the 2011 Ultimate Pulse Championship on Sunday night at the Camsur Watersports Complex here.

Bermudez held her own to join other heritage wakeboarder Efrain Walkeboard Champion Four Frontiers of the United States...even when other Philippine hotels fell by the wayside in the extreme water sports competition that joined 80 of the world's best.

"Iyan really can't determine who's going to win right off the bat," said Bermudez, who's also gunning up for the inaugural wakeboarding competition in the Southeast Asian Games this November in Indonesia.

"Whoever does better in the actual run, that's it. Sometimes sometimes some can play. But I hope to practice more starting this month for the SEA Games."

Bermudez captured the overall crown, which comes with six 20,000 prize (about P457,000), after topping the pro-debuted (92 percent), climbing second in the men's pro cable (96.10) and earning a citation in the pro-men's boat.

But 23-year-old Hamel Estate also made waves in his professional debut when he scored an upset over Bermudez's pet event in the men's pro cable (97.50).

"I never thought it would happen, but it did, so it's the best feeling in the world," Green said of his surprise victory over Pontiac, a former world champion.

Grant, a Year 8 Bangkok student who has British and Thai roots, also picked up a runner-up finish in the pro-obstacles (92).

"This is amazing," said the 26 year-old Brother.

"To beat the whole spectrum of open here is unreal," he added.

Bermudez topped the women's professional wakeboard champ competition after scoring a 90.50 to Elisabeth Pache of Germany's 91.50 in the final round.

There other Filipinas advanced to the women's wakeboard champ. Jessica Ann Ortiz of the United States' silver Lilandrei dominated with an 80.67 tally.

The Philippine hero had several falls, leaving Trina Rocco in sixth for second (76.67) and Jessica Salazar for third (53.33).

The United Stater picked up most of the top places with Brad Hansen (men's wakeboat), Philip Green (boat), Rawan Radcliffe (coach) and Andrew Powers (wakeskate-wrath), while Germany had Nick Lewis (junior men).

SEA GAMES bound Samantha Bermudez displays her winning form.

SPORTSWATCH

'Rambulan' lures 150 bets

THE "3M Rambulan 7 Cock Derby" will have three more qualifying rounds at Tan Cang Cockers tomorrow, Jan. 26 to 31.

The highest scorers so far with 3.5 points are Hatch Aguinaldo Sr. (MN).

As of yesterday, the number of entries have reached 150. Participants who will complete the seven qualifying rounds will settle before 8 p.m. today. For inquiries, call 7250288 and 7250883.

The second's entry fee is P1,000 but guaranteed prizes is P5 million. It features prize of P400,000 will be divided among four positions. The finals is set Feb. 2.

PSC chair, new Azkals coach in PSA Forum

IT'S DOING to be another interesting PSA Forum today as Philippine Sports Commission chair Ritchie Garcia and the new coach of the Philippine men's football team lead the panel of guests at Shakey's V-Mall, Sanctuary.

Garcia will discuss the preparations for the 25th Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia in November, while Aces Michael Mariano makes his first appearance in the public sports session since his near-fatal sports battle with and preceded by Dalton Bautista, Pagoo and Shakey's.

Joining the fun is the 10:30 a.m. forum are Del Jonathan Adaya and triathlon champion Jonathan Corpuz, who will talk about The Filipinos' debut in The 2nd International Big Bad Ass Sumo or Extreme on Feb. 20 to 27.

Pacman entries head Pasay derby

THE "2502 Pasay Mayoralty-sized 9-Cock Derby" finally scrounges its way to the modern Pasay City Cockpit, harnessed by popular cockfight enthusiasts Patrick Antonio and boasting men Manny Pacquiao.

Antonio, sole champion of The World Shadow Cup last Sunday will again field Sagbayan 8-10 fighters.

Antonio's latest conquest was his fourth WSC title and 30th at championship overall since 1983.

Pacquiao, winner of several big time events like the 2009 Pacman 100 8 Big Boats 7-Cock Derby, will rely on his Pinikan Roundheads and Cockate Brown Reds.

Other top contenders are the Cebu group of C. Alip, Gen. Eddie Rong Plaza, 2009 WSC champions James Campos and Jorge Ramos and 2007 IGC International Derby champion Joe Sanford.

Other participants are recent NCR World Championship winners John Tiamzon and Alan Saningan, Jr., Pinaxi, Nestor Mercado, James Uy, Gerry Ramos, Odie Fuentes, Jun Dimamio, Jet Peñaredo, Arman Ramos, Bel Fuentebella, Vice Ganda, Vic Sotto, Ate Gay, Joel Torres, Rod Nicolson, Audrey Mandapat, Eddy Tarobal, Gregor Arjonia, Boy Mamon, Jake Macasaet, Gerry "Bay" Espina, Eruy Marfori and Tady Palma among others.

Lim calls for baseball revival

MANILA MAYOR Alfredo Lim has called on all sectors to join hands in reviving and continuing baseball a "big thing" again even as he lauded the effort of Rizalino Crisostomo in playing the role of "ambassador of baseball" in the country.

"Baseball was once a popular sport here and we have a number of baseball stadiums before," said Lim. "But its popularity has waned because of basketball."

Lim said sports leaders and other sponsors should channel some of their resources in discovering more baseball talents since Filipinos have a good chance of excelling in the sport.

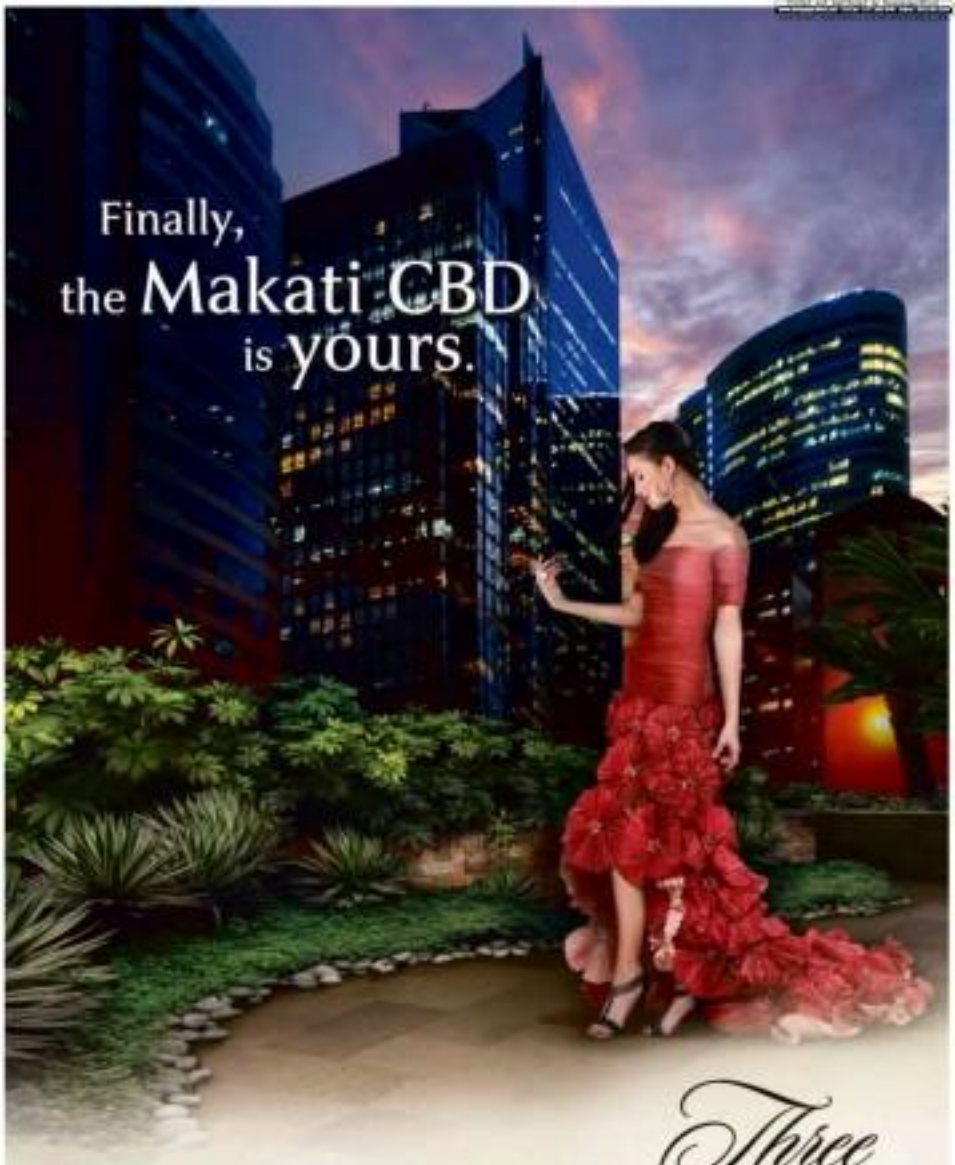
"It's an exciting sport since height is not a big factor and daggers are interesting to watch. Anyone can participate no matter in Manila," added Lim during a recent courtesy call of the Rizalino coaches Shinichi Ikarika.

The Manila mayor fancies in the fledgling Baseball Philippines by becoming the first back-to-back champion. They ruled Series 6 and 7 by beating the Cebu Dolphins and the Batangas Bulls, respectively.

Malhacan Cruisers officials, led by CEO Melvin Sumners, chief finance officer Edwin Cadena and consultant Rich Cruz, and Dragon Sharks presented their trophies to Lim.

Rotmen promised his support in hosting the national team for the Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia this November.

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim (fourth from left, front row) and Harbour Centre CEO Mitos Romero (in dark shirt) hold the trophies won by the Manila Sharks in the Baseball Philippines Series during the team's recent courtesy call at the Manila City Hall.



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Editor Abelardo S. Glaraday

DID YOU KNOW

TODAY IS the 130th birth anniversary of National Artist Juan Arellano Fidelo Antonio. Born in 1902 in Binondo, Manila, he is known for designing the Philippine University Administration and Science buildings, Manila Post Office and Galaxy Theater on Rizal Avenue. **Zaldy Bonilla Aquino Rosario**

3 cops boost American's faith in Pinoys

Honest Taguig policemen cited for returning briefcase to missionary

By Miko Morales

THANKS TO three members of the Taguig City police, an American missionary's faith in the inherent goodness of Filipinos has been reinforced.

For returning a briefcase containing money, bank checks and travel documents to its owner, Senior Insp. Armando Lipata, SPO2 Clemente Dupilo and PO1 Sadat Abad, members of the city's Traffic Enforcement Unit, were cited yesterday by Taguig Mayor Ma. Laarni Cayetano during a flag raising ceremony at city hall.

Abad said he vividly remembers the incident of Fr. Dean William when they went to his office at around noon on Dec. 30 to return his valuables.

"He hugged us tightly and told his fellow Filipino missionaries that they were wrong to doubt their compatriots," Abad added in Filipino.

Earlier that day, the three policemen were conducting a routine patrol in Bicutan as part of efforts to step up police visibility when they saw a group of street children huddled around something on the sidewalk.

"We drove the children away, and discovered that they were trying to open a briefcase," Lipata said.

He added that they took the briefcase and, when they opened it, they found around P4,20,000 in cash and several blank checks. They also discovered travel documents, including a US passport issued to William which they used to track him down.

"He told us later when we came to his office that the Filipino missionaries had told him to stop looking for the briefcase, because somebody had probably already taken it," Abad said. "But the priest replied that he had faith in Filipinos, saying they were honest."

That probably explained Dupilo and William's smile, Abad added.

Lipata said that when they found the briefcase, he thought of going to a radio or television station to seek help from the media in tracking down William.

"But we decided to first exhaust all efforts to locate the owners," he told the Inquirer.

It was perfect timing, too, since the priest was scheduled to fly back to the US the following day, something that would have been impossible without his passport, Lipata said.

William told the policemen that he had placed the briefcase on top of his car and that he forgot all about it as he drove off because he was in a hurry.

In his upcoming homily, Chief Insp. Sofia Ingalla noted that the past days had been rough on the Philippine National Police following the reported involvement of several police men in criminal activities like rape and drug use.

"For the past few weeks..., the mistake of our brought disgrace to all [of us]," said Ingalla, the acting deputy police chief for operations.

For her part, Cayetano pointed out that the citizens were utmost at giving credit where credit was due like in the case of Lipata, Orpilla and Abad whom she lauded for "their honesty not only their bravery."

Several other members of the Taguig police were also honored, among them those who arrested soldiers who took part in two heists, one of them involving the Western Union branch in Western Bicutan.

Senior Supt. Teresa Apolinario Jr., the city police chief, said the immediate arrest of the six robbers was due to the efficient coordination between police officers.

"Within seven hours, the police managed to succeed for the six suspects," he noted.

Convicted ex-NBI agent files new motion, cites 'latest' evidence

JOBSAND

By Miko Morales

A DISMISSED agent of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) who was found guilty of kidnapping a tourist in 2005 was sentenced to a jail term of reclusion perpetua (20 to 40 years) despite a purported recantation of the complainant which the lawyer of the accused obtained yesterday morning.

Salvador Panelo, lawyer of former NBI agent Marvin Sevilla, presented to Judge Oscar Pimentel of Regional Trial Court Branch 147 a motion to admit the letter of Carolyn Crafton as part of the evidence.

But the court proceeded with the promulgation despite the new development, with Pimentel saying the motion would be tackled by a new judge.

Pimentel is set to retire on Sunday after reaching the mandatory age of 70.

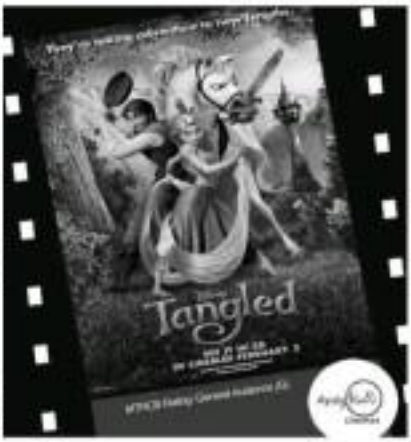
"Not only are we going to file a motion for reconsideration, but also an omnibus motion for a new trial with this piece of new evidence," Panelo said.

In a handwritten letter addressed to Pimentel, Crafton said she was "wrong [in] in the truth of the innocence of Marlon Serrano, Danilo Escalon and Ramon Gancon."

"I could see, in conscience as it has bothered me for the last six years, allow the continued detention of the aforesaid persons for the crimes they have not committed."

Crafton maintained that she was not paid or intimidated to write the letter, which she said she made on her own volition.

SPEED CAP
A sign informs motorists of the speed limit on Commonwealth Avenue, dubbed Quezon City's "killer highway." The speed limit takes effect today with the deployment of Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) personnel to the area on motorcycles. The owner-of-violator's will be posted on the MMDA web site as "speedcam" and will not be deleted unless they pay the corresponding fine.
MARI LOPEZ



Robredo request to meet Makati mayor nixed

By Miko Morales

MAKATI Mayor Jejomar Erwin Binay has denied down a request of Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo for a meeting on the city's peace and order situation, saying that politics could be behind the the request.

"I need to understand the sudden interest to Makati and its peace and order situation, which appears to have been prompted by the car theft incident involving a relative of Mar Roxas, who a president of the Liberal Party, of which you are the mayor, the vice president," the mayor wrote in reply to Robredo.

"Unless a convincing basis is provided, I regret that I must respectfully decline your request," he concluded.

Quoting a portion of Robredo's letter the latter sent on Jan. 18, Binay said the interior secretary proposed the meeting to "discuss and collectively find solution to pressing peace and order issues, specially in the City of Makati."

Binay counter, Margarita Juan, but her set to thieves on the same day the letter was sent.

The Makati mayor told Robredo

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Cop, businesswoman found dead inside condo unit

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE BODIES of a police official and a businesswoman were found yesterday morning inside their condominium unit in Manila.

Homicide investigators of the Manila Police District said that both had been dead for several days because their bodies had started to decompose.

However, they were still uncertain how Chief Supt. Johnson Adiong, 59, chief of the research and analysis section of the Police Regional Office 2 (Director-for Investigation and Detective Management), and Lydia Andres, 56, owner of several beauty salons and mobile phone stores, ended up dead.

Case investigator PO2 Ramonchie Tolentino said both may have been shot in the head although it was difficult to be certain because of the state of the bodies.

He added that he was still waiting for the autopsy results to confirm his finding.

Witnesses said the victims had a relationship and that they met since a week at Unit 812 of the University Commissioner Place on Concepcion Aguila Street in Quiapo.

According to Valentino, the two were last seen entering their unit at 11:20 p.m. on Jan. 20.

Security guard Andy Joman, in his police investigation that the bodies were discovered at 10 a.m. yesterday after a bad smell was reported by a resident on the seventh floor.

Adiong' sister and the police were called in and when the door to the unit was opened, they saw victims sprawled on the bed and Alfonso on the floor with a 9 mm pistol beside him.

Valentino said there were no signs of forcible entry and of the victims' belongings vandalized intact. The bodies were brought to the Philippine National Police Crime Laboratory for autopsy.

21-year-old man charged for taking teen's naked pics

By Jeannette I. Andrade

ISABACIO of child abuse and violation of the anti-voyeurism law were filed with the Manila City Prosecutor's Office against a 21-year old man after allegedly uploaded naked pictures of his teenage girlfriend on a popular social networking site.

Erwin Salayon, a resident of Sampaloc, Manila, was formally charged with violation of the public act 7610 or the anti-child abuse law and Republic Act 9995 or the anti-voyeurism law after a 17-year old girl, who claimed he had sex with her, said he took photographs of her while she was naked and then posted the pictures on Facebook.

In her complaint, the girl claimed that she and Salayon had been in a relationship for a year and that on Jan. 13, he invited her over to his house. Unknown to her, the invitation meant that he wanted to have sex. She said that when she agreed, he proceeded to take pictures of her naked.

She added that Salayon later texted her and asked if he could upload her pictures on Facebook. She said that she gave him permission to do so but that the pictures he posted should be the ones in which she was decent.

However, Salayon uploaded her naked photographs on Facebook, the victim claimed. She added that her violated modesty drove her to try to kill herself. When her attempt failed, she confided in her relatives who advised her to file charges against Salayon, she said in her complaint.

TOWED AWAY
Padlock drivers line up for processing after members of the Manila Traffic and Parking Bureau apprehend them for illegal parking near City Hall. JAUHARI SALADAY

Woman's skeleton found in La Mesa Dam

By Julie M. Aurelio

THE SKELETON remains of a woman who was believed to have been raped and killed was discovered at La Mesa Dam in Quezon City over the weekend.

Investigator PO2 Loreto Tagno of the Quezon City Police District's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit identified the victim as Rolando Medenilla Salinas, 66, of Barangay Bahay Lai, Quezon province.

He said the woman's skeleton was found at around noon on Sunday on the grounds of the water reservoir.

Tagno said the remains were identified as Salinas's through a senior citizen's identification card that was found beside it.

The skeleton was discovered by Rodolfo Reyes, 33, a resident of Arapaco in Caloocan City, who told the police that he was walking in a forested area when his dog began barking.

He said he approached his dog and was surprised when he saw a skeleton with white hair lying on the ground. Also found beside it were with clothes, slippers and accessories.

Tagno said the woman may have been dead for at least four months and that she could have been raped and killed in the area.

He added that although some of the victim's ribs were crushed, the lower part of the skeleton was intact with the legs spread. The woman's underwear was missing, he said.

According to Tagno, it was possible that the woman was left there after she was raped and killed.

A disrespectful Cabinet official

THE SOONER President Noy gets his cholesterol running more, Mar Roxas, in his circle of advisers—even in an unofficial capacity—the better for his administration.

Roxas has the expertise, experience and brains that can't be matched by the President's closest advisers.

More importantly, Mar Roxas trusts the President with information—he refers to the latter as "Chief"—unlike some of his Cabinet officials.

* * *

A Cabinet member and a confidante who is close to the President, recently talked behind P-Noy's back.

The intimate was heard to have revealed the following comment about the President to the Cabinet official:

"Naay, ang sinu-sino ay subuy (Noy boss is senior-bonded)."

"Subuy" also has another more unpleasant meaning, **edsida I don't want to mention here.**

The two reportedly had a good laugh over the comment.

The comment reportedly reached the President because it was made before a group, but it did not get a reaction from the President.

Disrespect towards the President by his subordinates usually goes unpunished.

Several months ago, P-Noy's friend unceremoniously bodily takes holds the nape of undersecretary-rold reporters he was the only one who could "control the President."

Even if it was true that he could control whatever urges the President had, why should he say so in public?

* * *

The disrespectful Cabinet official is not seen in the President's circle like Rong Nagunat, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. chair, or former police official Ricardo Diokno, Bureau of Corrections director, who would never talk behind the President's back.

This is the same Cabinet official who used to hold drinking session in Malacañang after office hours till the wee hours of the morning.

He and his friends would allegedly make up the Bistro chef to cook pulutan (finger food) for them.

ON TARGET
ANDREW TAGLO

This is the same Cabinet member who was seen downplayed on a table at the lobby of a five-star hotel, reportedly very drunk.

The same official came to Cabinet meetings late because he was nursing a hangover from a drinking session of the previous night.

If he's the driver, the President's close friend, why can't P-Noy tell him one despite all his shortcomings?

P-Noy's deep sense of gratitude?

According to a Malacañang source, he is hooked to four of Noynoy Aquino's biggest contributor during the last presidential campaign.

* * *

Some of the President's close-in bodyguards have been complaining about his inebriated habits.

One of his bodyguards said the President is already up to the wee hours of the morning.

Lately, he would drive his Porsche, a newly-acquired possession, to the family's Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac province in the over hours to hold talks with relatives.

Then he would drive back to Malacañang.

The President's bodyguards are worried about his safety on the road.

They can't catch up with him on the expressway because the Porsche is a speed machine.

"I'm now living happens to most Presidents, we will be blamed," said a bodyguard.

Will somebody please tell P-Noy that he's no longer the young bachelor that he was in the 1990s, that he's already the President of the Republic of the Philippines and that if something untoward happens to him the entire country will be in disarray?

10-month-old baby needs help

By Santiago B. Alvarezes

JOAQUIN Christopher Pascual was diagnosed to have biliary atresia, a rare sickness of the liver, his doctors said. Joaquin needs to be operated on before he turns 2 years old.

The parents of the 10-month-old baby, Raymundo and Clarissa Pascual, have been advised to raise P3 to P4 million for his liver transplant which would probably take place in Taiwan.

"We are simple employees working to raise a good family. Our combined incomes are not even enough for our own family's needs," said the couple in a letter to the Inquirer.

The Pascuals said they are racing against time to come up with the funds to save their son's life. Joaquin, they added, had also been diagnosed at 2 months old for jaundice, a yellow pigmentation of the skin.

"We shall do everything possible for your kind consideration and generosity," said the couple who hails from Tanza, Cavite province.

Raymundo and Clarissa can be reached at (0908)889-3470, (0915) 7508875, and (0917)-8135862. They have opened a bank account for Joaquin at Banco de Oro, with account number 4788410286.

(PASCUAL)

METROBRIEFS

Passenger bus catches fire on Skyway

A PASSENGER bus caught fire as it was traveling on the northbound lane of Skyway in Taguig City at 7:30 a.m. yesterday, causing an hour-long traffic jam in the area. No one was injured in the incident, according to the operations operator Skyway Clark, bus driver Freddie Tabuk said the Cares Transport bus was running when he noticed black smoke coming from the back of the vehicle where the engine was. According to Skyway O&M traffic chief Louie Manalo, Tabuk said he pulled over to check if the engine or vehicle had caught fire. He added that the passengers evacuated from the vehicle. Emergency responders attempted to put out the fire using chemical extinguishers but the blaze consumed the vehicle. Initial investigation pointed to faulty electrical wiring as the primary cause of the fire, Manalo said. The case has been turned over to the Bicutan traffic sector police for further investigation. The bus was removed from the area at 8 a.m. after which traffic in the area went back to normal. **Mike Blanche**

Man nabbed for stealing car

A MAN WAS arrested on Sunday night after he was allegedly caught in the act of stealing a car at a mall parking lot in Bonifacio City. The car thief-suspect was identified as Bryan Gomez, 26, a resident of Gumtsa Street in Caniogan, Caloocan City. Chief Insp. Rodelfo Marcelo of the Bonifacio Global City Police Station 14 said Gomez was caught by Jeffrey Dela Cruz, 30, a security guard of Ever Gotesco Commercial Center, after he allegedly tried to steal a car owned by Lovelyn Ann Bagtas, 32, a resident of Quezon City. **Julie M. Aurelio**

Paco Church altar blessing on Feb. 1

HIS EMINENCE Gaudencio Cardinal B. Rosales, DD, Archbishop of Manila, will lead the special ecumenical liturgy highlighting the dedication of the church and renovated altar of the San Fernando de Dilao Parish Church in Paco, Manila, on Feb. 1. The Mass starts at 6 p.m.

Joining Cardinal Rosales are parish priest Msgr. Rolando de la Cruz, Bishop Deogracias S. Iñiguez, Bishop Socrates B. Villegas and Bishop Nicolas C. Bacani, the first Filipino ordained bishop in 1964. The ecumenical liturgy is under the parochial jurisdiction of the CMRI Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a Belgian missionary. Also invited to attend are Msgr. Domingo Cirilos who succeeded Bacani as parish priest in 1966, Msgr. Jerry Santos, Msgr. Bobby Santos, Fr. Fernando Carpio, Fr. Frederick Castro, Fr. Danny Casuncad and Fr. Eric Mirera, among other priests. The dedication ceremony will also please all the faithful of the Virgin of Caysasay, which has also devotion data it. Missionaries says to the parish's special patronage.

Eusebia Zapata; 76

EUSEBIA Garcia-Zapata died on Jan. 21 at the age of 76. She is survived by her husband Rodolfo, children Leonor, Janette and Rogelio and grandchildren. Her body lies at St. Peter Chapels on Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. Her interment will be at 1 p.m. on Jan. 26 at Heritage Memorial Park in Taguig City.

FIERY DEFIANCE
Residents of Barangay Corazon de Jesus in San Juan City, which is beside the Pinaglabanan Shrine, burn an effigy as they protest the planned demolition of their homes to make way for the construction of a new city hall and government center. JOHN LIBAN

Robredo request...

Previous page A 17

that the number of car theft cases in the city was now according to records of the local police.

In 2010, 34 car theft cases have been reported to authorities, eight of those involving motorcycles.

Binay also questioned the immediate relief of Chief Inspector Pedro Pedron, who headed the precinct when reported the area where Perez' remains was taken.

"The incident happened at 1 a.m. in an area which was not among the areas prioritized by the recently implemented Malasakit Bantay Bahay (that time)," the official said.

"The car theft is an unfortunate incident, but the swiftness of the relief of the previous commander by no less than the chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) is also unfortunate," Binay added.

"In my recollection, personal reassignments in other local governments with a higher incidence of car theft do not get the same attention from the NCRPO chief."

The mayor also cited the achievements of his city's police force, saying that it has passed a crime solution efficiency rating of 81 percent in the entire Southern Police District.

The line was commendable, he added, considering the police-to-population ratio in the city.

The police-to-population ratio in the city stands at one officer to 6,752 persons in the daytime, although the figure goes down to 911 persons at night-fall, Binay said.

The ideal ratio is one police officer is to 500 persons.

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ganzon

Egypt says Gaza militants behind Coptic church blast

CAIRO—Egypt's Interior Minister Habib al-Adly accused a Palestinian group on Sunday of having masterminded the New Year's church attack in Alexandria that killed more than 20 people.

The Palestinian group Army of Islam, "which has links to al-Qaida, is behind the attack on al-Qiddisine church in Alexandria," Adly said in a speech to mark Police Day, carried live on state television.

President Hosni Mubarak took no time for image in categorizing the police "for finding the perpetrators of the terrorist act in Alexandria."

In a swift response, the Army of Islam denied any involvement in the deadly attack.

"The group of Islam has no relation, whether direct or indirect, to the attack on the Coptic church" in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria, a spokesperson for the group who gave his name as Abu Muhanna, told AFP.

"The Mossad (Israeli intelligence) was responsible for the attack."

An Egyptian security official told AFP that five Egyptians were arrested around 50 days ago in Alexandria in connection with the attack.

"During questioning the members of the group said that the planning of the attack had come from abroad," the source said.

Addressing senior officials and police hero members, Mubarak said the attack on the church had tried to target Egypt's unity and dismissed foreign calls for improved protection of the country's Christians as "interference."

"The latest attack in Alexandria, represents a painful attempt to bring (terrorism) back to Egypt," the killer in "a bid to stir division between the Copts and the Muslims."

On Jan. 1, a suicide bomber blew himself up outside a church as worshippers emerged from a New Year's Eve Mass.

Egypt's state Mena news agency on Sunday put the death toll at 23, with scores more wounded. Previously, the death toll stood at 21.

Later on Sunday, the interior ministry said an Egyptian had been arrested linked to the Army of Islam who confessed to having been contacted by the group which asked him to help its members sent to carry out the attack.

Ahmadi Lotfi Ibrahim Abu Hammad, a university graduate and native of Alexandria born in 1984, had admitted to serving in his involvement, it said in a statement. AFP

Silhouetted car in front of a Coptic Christian church that killed 21 worshippers in Alexandria, Egypt in this Jan. 1 photo.

BELGIAN citizens wage a "Shame" rally demanding the establishment of a government more than 289 days after election in Brussels on Jan 23.

Leaks: Palestinians offered major peace concessions to Israel

JERUSALEM—Palestinian negotiators secretly told Israel it could keep swathes of occupied East Jerusalem, according to leaked documents that show Palestinians offering much bigger peace concessions than previously revealed.

The documents, obtained by the Al Jazeera television channel, could undermine the position of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, whose public declarations about Jerusalem are at odds with what his officials were promising in private.

Equally sobering for the Palestinian people, who want to create a state in their land, is that the 1967 line is the last that Israel offered nothing in return for the concessions and turned down their offer by saying it did not go far enough.

The leaked minutes of a 2008 meeting between Palestinian, US and Israeli officials showed a senior Palestinian proposing that Israel annex all but one of its major Jerusalem settlements as part of a broad deal to end their decades-old conflict.

Al Jazeera said on Sunday it had other documents that it would publish shortly showing the Palestinians were also ready to make other massive concessions on the hugely sensitive issue of the right to return for Palestinian refugees.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat wrote on the deliberations, dismissing the documents as "a bunch of lies" during an appearance on Al Jazeera shortly after they were released.

In a heated exchange, Erekat was confronted by critics including Abdel Bari Atwan, editor of the London-based al Quds al-Arabi newspaper, who asked him who had authorized him or the Palestinian leadership "to give up Islamic holy sites."

One document quoted Erekat as telling an Israeli official:

"It is in our(sic) (hat ...we are offering you the biggest Jewish suburb in history." He cited the Hebrew word for Jerusalem.

Ahmed Qurie, the lead Palestinian negotiator in 2008, was quoted as proposing that Israel annex all Jewish settlements in Jerusalem except Har Homa. He also said Israel would keep control of a part of the Old City of Jerusalem.

"This is the first time in history (that we make such a proposition," the document quoted Ahmed Qurie as saying.

He added that the Palestinian leadership would be willing to "attempting to liquidate the Palestinian cause."

"This is a historic opportunity," Qurie said, referring to the Palestinian Authority's role in "attempting to liquidate the Palestinian cause."

"This is a historic opportunity for the Palestinian leadership, putting it in a position where it will be impossible to win the confidence of the people," said Zakaria al-Qaq, Palestinian commentator.

Israel has always said it would keep the main settlement blocs around Jerusalem, but the Palestinian leadership has adopted a tougher stance in its public declarations, never letting on it was ready to make such grand. Reuters

THE Dome of the Rock on the Compound known to Muslims as al-Haram al-Sharif, and to Jews as Temple Mount, in Jerusalem's Old City.

Thousands of Belgians protest political impasse

BRUSSELS—Thousands of Belgians staged a march of "Shame" in the capital on Sunday to demand a government after a seven-month impasse between Dutch and French-speaking politicians, a European record.

About 35,000 people took part in the march, police said, answering a Facebook call by young people from both sides of the country's language divide in the first demonstration of its kind since its conclusion June elections.

In an event often laced with humor, a well known comedian called for a "brussels and Stoo" revolution and some protesters wore stickers reading "A World for Belgium" after a Belgian actor call on men not to shave until the political crisis is resolved.

"What do we want? We want a government," cried the protesters, mainly young people, many sporting white lapel ribbons in what they had dubbed the march of "Shame."

The outfits were meant to recall the unprecedented "white march" of 1996 when 300,000 people took to the streets of Brussels to protest the crimes of Belgian child killer Marc Dutroux. It was the first of a series of silent marches against official incompetence in the scandal, which has undermined confidence in the state.

One of the event's organizers, 23-year-old graphic designer Simon Vandenbroeck, hailed the march as a success "that reconciled our hopes."

"Our politicians will have to start after such a turnout. If not, we will see other initiatives to take," he told AFP.

The political impasse—in this country hosting European Union headquarters—follows a disappointing divide between the Dutch-speaking north and the French-speaking south.

It has frustrated citizens who are mystifying initiatives to pressure political leaders to form a government.

Politicians have been squabbling over plans to give to different communities more autonomy since the June 13 general election, which also saw a strong vote for Flemish separatists. AFP

Portugal reelects conservative president

LISBON, Portugal—Portugal elected its conservative president to a second term in a landslide on Sunday, delivering a harsh political setback to the country's Socialist government which is struggling to contain an acute economic crisis.

Aníbal Cavaco Silva, who is supported by the main opposition Social Democratic Party, collected 53 percent of the vote to comfortably win the country's second-placed Socialist Party candidate Manuel Alegre, official figures showed with more than 99 percent of districts reporting. Four other candidates picked up the remaining votes.

The government ruled a bank bail by enacting deeply unpopular austerity measures amid fears that the financial crisis gulfs economic disaster for Portugal.

The president possesses the power—known as his "veto model"—to call a general election if he feels the government is on the wrong path.

The emphatic win for Cavaco Silva added to political pressure on the embattled center-left government as Prime Minister Jose Socrates scrambles to reassure investors of Portugal's ability to manage its crippling economy.

Portugal's political and economic fortunes are important for the rest of Europe because its government's collapse would add fresh uncertainty to the continent's debt crisis.

Many analysts predict Socrates' economic woes will sooner or later force it to accept a bailout like the ones provided to Greece and Ireland last year.

The government ruled a bank bail by enacting deeply unpopular austerity measures amid fears that the financial crisis gulfs economic disaster for Portugal.

The president possesses the power—known as his "veto model"—to call a general election if he feels the government is on the wrong path.

The emphatic win for Cavaco Silva added to political pressure on the embattled center-left

CAVACO Silva is hugged by his wife Maria after winning vote.

Against all odds, boy with AIDS lives a beautiful life

By Peter Appleborne

MONTCLAIR, N.J.—Some things we know for sure—a little boy dealt a seemingly impossible hand, the two gay men who decided to give him a home and a life, the sordid spell cast by the only home in Montclair.

Beyond that, well, it was what you could never quite know as much as what you could (but about 500) people, friends and strangers, in St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Saturday to ponder the lesson in grace and resilience, the parable of good lives and deeds outside the prescribed lives, in the remarkably long and wise-beyond-his-or-her-years Shannon Hansen, dead at the age of 20 on Jan. 14.

Few people begin life with so many strikes against them as Shannon had when he was born with AIDS on Sept. 11, 1990, to a crack addicted mother in a hospital in Plainfield. There were physical and developmental issues to be sure, enough that his twin sister, Michelle Reed, lived only 20 months. Deserted by his parents, he got his first breath in 1991 when two men, intent on saving for a baby with several physical needs, agreed to take him in.

The two, who came to be known as the Tims, Tim Hansen and Tim Vanover, were told he would probably live six months. But, as everyone's assessment, he began to thrive. He gained weight. His T-cell count steadily increased. In 1996, they adopted him, becoming the first gay couple in Washington to adopt a child. A year later, they adopted a second son, Hayden, 8 years older. When Tim Hansen got a new job in New York, they moved to Montclair in 1999.

Eventually, the family of two white gay men and two black children became two trios, two children and one home. Seeking short for Rockefeller. The Tims brought Sarky, a 4-year-old cross between a Shepherd and a quarter horse, for $3,500 in 2002 and gave him to Shannon on Christmas Eve.

Montclair, a densely populated suburb, not exactly bucolic country, but they had a double lot with an old carriage house near downtown. And Shannon had fallen in love with horses, almost transformed by their presence. Atop a horse, unerringly glued to the saddle, the slender child seemed to blossom. His back straighten, his eyes brighten, as if on top not of a horse, but of the world.

To say this was a blessing for Shannon is an understatement. But it wasn't just for Shannon. Sarky long, everyone in Shannon's extended, messy life, knew about the house with the horse and the incredibly lucky kid who owned him. And before long, the intervention of friends and Shannon was a mecca for children and a magnet for parents by invitation greeted with a wave from Shannon and often a greeting from Sarky, who seemed up to view neighbors each day on their way to work.

It's not as if everything went smoothly. Far from it. Shannon's health could be precarious, like the heart condition that almost killed him in 1998.

Sarky sometimes got free, galloping down busy Bellevue Avenue, where the New Jersey Transit buses go, then eating some of the neighbors' flowers. And the Tims—most, outgoing Tim Hansen and thin, more reserved Tim Manion—broke up, but only as a couple, not as Shannon's fathers, choosing to live together and continue to raise him.

None of that affected Shannon, who became a leader in his neighborhood and church, a Buddha candle always on his face, the iPod—full of Ella Fitzgerald, Edith Piaf, "The Lion King"—seemingly permanently attached. He graduated from a special education high school, traveled to Central America, Europe and Africa with his fathers, volunteered at the church food ministry. On Dec. 12, he became a Mark Bell in the books do. He seemed to live on his own and was in an elementary school teacher's aide.

And then on a night in January with flowers he got sick. Then he got sicker. There was pneumonia, sepsis, acute renal failure. "It's time," he said several times, seemingly in his normal, slightly bright voice. His one brave quote what he meant, but it didn't occur to anyone it meant that this was all the time he had. But it was.

Shannon's sister and friend, the boy John S. Mitchell recalled the day Shannon was helping with the collection plate.

"You can do better," Shannon said sensibly to one congregant. It was the story of his life: You can do better, he said, and without guile. Encouraging is, everyone did. New York Times Syndicate

Microsoft officially launches Windows Phone 7 in the Philippines

Partners with Smart and HTC to enhance Filipinos' digital experience

Microsoft Philippines, in partnership with HTC Corp. and Smart Communications, Inc., today launched Windows Phone 7, the latest and much-awaited mobile technology from Microsoft, designed to optimize the mobile experience and give its users everything they love in just a swap.

Excitement

"We are very excited to bring Windows Phone 7 and introduce it to the local market," said John Bussey, Managing Director, Microsoft Philippines. "Microsoft and its partners are delivering a different kind of mobile phone to fuel new experiences by making everyday tasks easier to accomplish – getting more done in fewer steps and providing timely information easier and faster."

Microsoft has worked closely with its partners to create and deliver a different kind of phone that allows the users to do all these and come back to the real world in the quickest way possible. Windows Phone 7 was designed to deliver a mobile experience that has the phone working better for people, bringing together the things they care about most and helping them get things done faster.

"We are pleased to partner with Microsoft to launching Windows Phone 7 devices in the Philippines," said Napoleon Nazarenus, President and CEO, Smart. "With Smart's superior network coverage powering Windows Phone 7 devices, we will provide mobile phone users a more productive and enriching experience."

Unique Experience

Bringing a unique experience across the local market, the sleek and elegantly-crafted HTC 7 Mozart is the first Windows Phone 7-powered smartphone to be available in the Philippines.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with Microsoft and Smart in making the Windows Phone 7 experience to a whole new level with HTC 7 Mozart," said Mark Sorgin, Country Manager for the Philippines, HTC Corp. "With the Windows Phone 7 technology powering the HTC 7 Mozart, users are given more control over the information that they need and are provided with a more enhanced mobile lifestyle."

The HTC 7 Mozart allows its users to have an all-around multimedia experience. It is equipped with the SRS WOW HD™ sa technology, enabling virtual surround sound for a richer listening and viewing experience. With Windows Phone 7 as the platform, it is also the first in the Philippines to offer the Zune music experience on a phone where users can play their music collection, synced wirelessly from their PC.

Unique Design

Its user interface is distinguished by a unique design and one of its most prominent and useful development is the customizable Start screen with Live Tiles, facilitating a more personal experience, allowing its users to quickly see everything they care about on the screen. The Live Tiles provide the user with real-time updates on the things that matter to them, such as news, appointments or the status and profile pictures of friends. New Live Tiles can be easily created from whatever content users want, such as applications, websites and music, with integrated experiences built from Microsoft's deep portfolio such as Windows Live, Bing, and Microsoft Office Mobile.

More Power

The HTC 7 Mozart and Windows Phone 7 collaboration gives its users the power to control their data, with the Windows Phone equipped with mobile versions of the Microsoft software used every day – from surfing the web with Internet Explorer Mobile to getting work done with Microsoft Office Mobile applications such as Outlook Mobile for e-mails, calendar and contacts, as well as Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote for managing documents.

Aside from its ease of use, the HTC 7 Mozart also looks stunning with its slim aluminum physique, making it a perfect fit for its user's grip.

This latest mobile technology breaks the current smartphone convention to help people quickly and easily find and consume data, information and services from the Web and applications. For complete information about Windows Phone 7 features and capabilities and the HTC 7 Mozart, visit http://www.windowsphone.com/ http://www.htc.com/www/product/7mozart/overview.html

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BUSINESS

Microsoft 365 Available

Investments in electronics hit $2.3B in '10

Money poured into booming sector highest on record

By Amy R. Remo

INVESTMENTS in the local semiconductor and electronics industry reached a record high last year of $2.318 billion or about P102.5 billion, according to the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc.

Arijit president Ernie Garcia said he reported that last year's investment level was a 386 percent improvement over the $484 million in investments registered in 2009.

The investment level likewise far exceeded the group's initial estimate of $1.3 billion for 2010.

He added that last year was the seventh time that the local industry managed to breach the $1-billion investment mark. A similar feat was achieved in 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000 and 2007.

According to Santiago, investments last year came from 100 companies. These investments are expected to generate 109,500 new direct jobs. For every direct job, seven indirect jobs are created, he said.

Santiago also reported that during the recent Arijit meeting with President Benigno Aquino III, the industry expressed its desire to more than double the country's exports within six years, from $20 billion to 2009 to at least $50 billion to 2016.

"The electronics industry had a strong start and encouraging finish in 2010 and is expected to hit an export revenue level of over $ 1.1 billion ... (reflecting a) 89 billion to 101 billion, increase over 2009 exports," Santiago said.

The official also noted that the local semiconductor and electronics industry remained bullish for this year and that the electronics sector will continue to be the driver of growth of Philippine exports.

Seiju, the largest organization of foreign and Filipino semiconductor and electronics

INVESTMENTS /A2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Jan. 24, 2011
44.580

STOCK MARKET
Jan. 24, 2011
48.33

Stocks down 1.22%

SHARES IN the local bourse dropped sharply on the first trading day of the week, continuing a sell-off that persisted for the most critical week, as investors continued to take profits from gains in recent weeks.

The Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) dropped 1.22 percent or 48.33 points to 3,902.71 by the end of the trading session yesterday. The index had declined to as low as 3,889.24 earlier in the lackluster day.

"The selling is instigated by foreign funds who are still[a]re cost about inflation across the region," said one trader from a local brokerage firm.

All sectoral indices ended in the red, again led by the holding firms index which suffered 2.28 percent. The All-Shares Index—which takes into account the movement of all listed stocks—closed 1.37 percent.

Transaction volume was heavy with P5.43 billion worth of shares changing hands during the session. Decliners swamped gainers, 133 to 53.

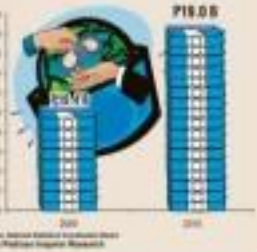
STOCKS /B2

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

FDIs approved in 3rd qtr up by 82.9 percent (3rd Quarter 2010, in billion pesos)

Total foreign direct investments approved during the third quarter of 2010 amounted to P19 billion – an increase of 82.9 percent from the P10.4 billion approved in the same period in 2009.



Source: Bangko Sentralng Pilipinas (BSP)
Rizza Mae Lopez Inquirer Research

BSP sees January inflation within 2.7-3.6% range

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas expects inflation in January to settle within the 2.7- to 3.6-percent range, allaying concerns that prices might increase at a faster pace this year due to rising costs of oil in the world market and the weather disturbances that might affect food supply.

The inflation forecast of the BSP for January is slower than the 3.6 percent registered for the full year of 2010.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said inflation in January was expected to remain moderate as the decline in electricity prices would likely offset the impact of the increase in the prices of selected food items.

For the rest of the year, Tetangco said, inflation was expected to remain within the official target. The government has set a goal of keeping inflation in 2011 to a range of 2 to 4 percent.

"The BSP[C] recent raise still show a well-behaved inflation path, with full-year inflation rates over the policy horizon still seen to be within target range," he said.

The BSP chief, however, said the monetary authority was not changing off economic over-general acceleration of inflation this year. He said the BSP was monitoring developments, both in the domestic and international fronts, to stay prepared to implement measures that could temper inflation if upward price pressures strengthen.

"Nevertheless, we are watchful of developments, particularly movements in global commodity prices, changes in growth trajectories of our major trading partners, and their impact on domestic demand and inflation expectations," Tetangco said.

The BSP's latest inflation fore-

BSP /A2

Investors' appetite for T-bills wanes

By Reena F.W. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday rejected all bids for Treasury bills, citing lukewarm investor interest.

The Bureau of the Treasury wanted to raise a total of P8.5 billion from the new T-bills. But lenders were asking for a rate increase of at least 2 percent.

Had the BTr accepted bids for the 91-day T-bills, the yield would have gone up by 26.4 basis points to an average of 3.34 percent.

The BTr rejected bids for the benchmark issue even if the average interest rate was less than the 4 percent prevailing in the secondary market.

"That (yield) is not ideal," National Treasurer Roberto B. Tan said. "And so is the 4-percent average for the 182-day bill."

In yesterday's primary market auction, yield on the 182-day bill would have gone up by 26.3 basis points to an average of 4.092 percent if the BTr had accepted.

However, Tan said that there were no done deals even at the secondary market for the three-month and six-month bills.

Also, yields on the 364-day bill would have gone up by 19.6 basis points to an average 4.439 percent had the BTr not rejected all bids.

At the Philippine Dealing & Exchange Corp., sources that changed hands amounted to a measly P60 million, pushing the rate for the year-long debt paper to 3.233 percent.

"The market appears quite jittery about the volatility seen last week, and that was due to the depreciation of the peso as well as inflationary fears throughout Asia," he said.

But according to Tan, such fears are unfounded and there are "commonsense" the Philippine number since the rate of rise in consumer prices are still within the government official cap.

Yesterday, the total volume of investors cleared landowners interest and failed to match most of the governments offers.

INVESTORS /B3

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Megaworld, Fil-Estate in ₱5-B Tagaytay project

Prime destination for medical, educational tourism

By Dazzle L. Lucas

PROPERTY DEVELOPERS Megaworld Corp. and Fil-Estate Land Inc. have teamed up to develop 1,149 hectares of land in Tagaytay into a model class "common recreational community called Twin Lakes, the companies said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the companies said that Fil-Estate had just commenced the master planning of the project which would cover the area's entire shoreline overlooking its own private lake and the scenic Taal Lake.

The cost of the initial phases was estimated to exceed P5 billion.

"The entire community will be developed by phases and will become the country's most distinguished tourism estates," said Fil-Estate vice president Sylvia Mendiola said in the statement.

The initial phases of the development will host a luxury hotel, residential villas and condominiums, a shopping village, botanical gardens, sports and country club, and plantation estates.

"Twin Lakes provides from Tagaytay's mountain peak resort to its lakeside," Mendiola added. "The project's vast land size opens up a lot of possibilities for development."

The succeeding phases will offer a golf course, international hotels, boarding schools and a retirement village, complete with wellness and medical amenities.

"We want to take advantage of the cool weather in Tagaytay," she said. "Our ultimate goal is to transform these resort estates into prime destinations for medical and wellness/medical tourism-cum-stay."

Full development on the project came two weeks after Ambrosia Taal Alliance Global Group Inc.—the parent firm of Megaworld—closed a P9.68-billion deal to acquire 60 percent of Fil-Estate.

AGI said it had paid in cash 21 percent of the total subscription price.

"With the infusion of new capital by AGI, Fil-Estate is now in a strong position to pursue mature tourism-oriented projects immediately," the company said in the disclosure.

Apart from the Tagaytay project, Alliance Global is also keen on developing Fil-Estate's tourism-related site on Boracay Island amounting to about 10 percent of the resort island's total area.

It was earlier disclosed that AGI would pay the subscription price for Fil-Estate in two tranches. Full payment will be made after the Securities and Exchange Commission approves the increase in Fil-Estate land's capitalization.

Metro Pacific Holding Inc. is an active player in a wide range of industries—from real estate development to food and beverage, quick service restaurants and hotels and resorts development.

₱10-B capital hike to boost bank growth

METROPOLITAN BANK and Trust Co. expects to grow its loan portfolio by 11 to 12 percent this year after successfully raising P10 billion in fresh capital via a stock rights offer.

In a briefing, Metrobank officials said the new funds would allow the country's second-largest financial group to lend more to both the corporate and individual borrowers to take advantage of the buoyant economic conditions.

At the same time, Metrobank interim chairman Jesus Arranz told reporters that the bank's capital adequacy ratio—a measure of financial safety the companies lend capital versus total liabilities—would rise to 17.8 percent after the stock rights offer compared to only 16 percent prior to the offering.

Officials expressed optimism that the bank would be able to maximize the new funds into productive loans and help it beat its performance last year.

As of the third quarter of 2010, Metrobank has already exceeded by 39 percent its numbers in the same period in 2009, they said.

At the same time, officials said the bank was planning to set up as many as 20 branches in China over the next five years, depending on the approval they receive from Chinese bank regulators.

At present, Metrobank is the only Filipino-owned bank operating with a so-called Wholly-Owned Foreign Enterprise license in China. Luzon Tan-owned allied banking Corp. also has presence in China through a joint venture with a local partner.

The listing of the bank's new shares under the rights offer was narrowed yesterday morning at the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Metrobank announced late last year that it would raise P10 billion through a stock rights offer involving the sale of 200 million common shares priced at P50 apiece.

The offer price was computed based on the 15-day volume-weighted average of the bank's common shares under the PSE price to the Inc. reporting date.

"As with our previous offerings, the response to the stock rights issue was very encouraging," Metrobank president Arthur Ty said. "We received 1.7 times oversubscription. We thank our shareholders and investors for their continuing interest and continued support for the bank."

"This capital raising activity will help improve Metrobank's capital adequacy and financial strength," he added.

Specifically, the proceeds from the rights offer will strengthen Metrobank's Tier 1 capital in anticipation of the higher capital standards to be imposed on banks under the Basel III framework.

It will also position the bank to support critical growth initiatives given the improving economic conditions and positive market prospects, the bank said. — DAZZLE L. LUCAS

Stocks to reckon

MARKET RIDER

Dave Ismayre

LAST WEEK, I presented some information provided by two international financial houses that gave insights as to what products, industries and/or businesses were seen to fare well in 2011, which I thought could also serve as a good guide for picking stocks.

Two things happened: First, as my colleagues and I received some comments from people we met and share more critical information they know that could help fund winning stocks and bonds.

Second and as expected, many just opted for "bad tips." So, I'm now bombarded with queries as to what stocks they should buy and/or sell.

Additional parameter

As of the end of trading last Friday on Wall Street, the Dow Jones Industrial Average or DJIA was said to be already trading on its eighth consecutive week of gains, seemingly indicating a positive scenario should it be the case.

The local bourse, however, had been enduring an erratic course in the same period, the direction of which was becoming evident last week—it is on a downward trend—despite a seemingly investment market breakdown.

The trading results this week should therefore be interesting. They could very well provide additional clues as to what extent the market may be taking next month. Even in the whole quarter.

The market appeared to be at a turning point as of the end of trading on Friday. It has broken the market support of 4,000, a critical level which is important in keeping the market from breaking down. Contrary to this, if many still think that the market will do otherwise. Surely, the market will fluctuate but it will not succumb to a breakdown.

Market momentum is just too strong at the moment. And this is happening despite the continued selling image of foreign investors.

Incidentally, this also raises the possibility that the trading activities of foreign investors could rise, on their own account, being about neutral turning points in local market trends.

In any will events, while on the sign, selling, on one hand, had brought about market movements and actual market reversals in the past, net foreign buying, on the other hand, had also helped reverse falling market trends. This is because foreign buying and/or selling activities are dependent on market conditions.

The recent foreign trading activities cannot independently create actual changes in local market trends. They can only contribute to changing local market trends to some extent—so-to-speak that should also guide us in making our list of stock picks.

Bottom line spin

I will oblige with the requests for stock tips. I may not completely agree with this attitude as an investor that stocks to accurately make us rich. But much more to financial freedom, but for the sake of walking through the park together, let's speak.

But, again, it will not be spoon feeding at all. Stock picking is tricky. It can be synonymous! but is certainly be instead to be perfectly correct, what may look logical may not necessarily become true.

Also, like I have been saying, I have not taken back my previous trading recommendation to continue selling first and second line stocks. There are certainly many stocks that were left behind are now starting to catch up with their unfolding true values.

It is for this reason, too, that I have only nudged up to now to short-term trading moves with unfolding stock plays, speculative or otherwise.

To satisfy those who requested stock tips, check out the list of stocks I'm providing. I divided them on the basis of their identified prospects for 2011 and the economic variables affecting them.

On the basis of international market developments: Phelps Mining Corp. (PM), Atlas Consolidated Mining & Development Corp. (AT), Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. (LC), Nickel Asia Corp. (NIKL), Oriental Peninsular Resources Group Inc. (ORE) for its two earth or precious metals business, and TSC Steel Corp. for its basic metal business need for steel products in construction, infrastructure and allied services sector.

On the basis of local/country business and economic developments: Alliance Power Corp., Manila Electric Co. (MER), Semirara Mining Corp. (SCC) for electricity power and energy; San Miguel Corp. (SMC), Universal Robina Corp., Emerson Bata Mfgrd Inc. (GMA7) and Jollibee Food Corp. (JFC) for food, beverage & tobacco sector; Bolo Corp. (BHL); Lucenzo & Rancho Model Corp. (LUC), and alliance Global Group Inc. (AGI), and to some extent DFNN, Inc. (DFNN), on its prospective gambling/casino business.

Aside from property stocks which I do not have to explain why, I am not including oil stocks at the moment despite forecasts that the price of oil will climb further from its current price of about USD90.00/barrel. The two major listed local companies, The Philodrill Corp. (PO) and Oriental Petroleum and Mineral Corporation (OPM) are drawing drastic from current are already know. They must have additional rave oil assets to outperform.

The list is not yet complete. The list may change anytime, too. So, better watch out for the individual stock reviews and recommendations that will come out soon.

(You may reach the Market Rider at: market.rider@inquirer.com.ph or at dave.ismayre@yahoo.com.)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

CURRENCIES

Bank lending seen to slow down in second half

DOE mulls over oil firms' ethanol blend requirements

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy is still considering whether it will push through with the plan to blend gasoline with 10 percent ethanol at this present ethanol supply in the country cannot fully address the requirements of all companies.

"It's not mandatory," said Energy Undersecretary Jose Layug, Jr., referring to the government's plan to raise the ethanol blend to 10 percent from the current 5 percent. "In fact, that's the job of the National Biofuels Board. We will recommend to the DOE the mandate to raise the blending to E10. We are not there yet, and we're still conducting public consultations."

Supporting this view was a provision in the Biofuels Law which stated that "within four years from the effectivity of this Act, the NBFB created under this act is empowered to determine the feasibility and thereafter recommend to DOE to increase the minimum of 10 percent blend of bioethanol by volume into all gasoline fuel distributed and sold by each and every oil company in the country."

According to Layug, there are a number of issues that have to be ironed out during these consultations since there is still no adequate supply of local ethanol.

"We also need to emphasize that, although we advocate ethanol fuel, we have to ensure that it will not push pump prices or increase as well," he explained.

He added that the government could not afford to push for the increase in ethanol blend to 10 percent, only to see local oil prices go up as well.

On the same token, the local oil companies must ensure that they purchase fuel from local ethanol producers. They are given priority, and the DOE will issue a circular on that effect. The law mandates oil companies that fund ethanol production must first source it locally.

"What we propose to do is penalize penalize if they do not comply. Some of them will import, but we have to make sure that they purchase from local ethanol producers first before they import. So far, all of local production is being tapped." – Jerry R. Barrus

Rise of key rates seen to dampen appetite for loans in '11, BDO says

By Michelle V. Ramos

BANCO DE ORO expects bank lending to slow down to a single-digit level this year, brought on by a moderate increase in interest rates in the second half of the year.

But lending activities will still be sufficient enough to help the economy post decent growth this year, said BDO, the country's largest bank in terms of assets.

In the first 11 months of 2010, data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that outstanding loans extended by universal and commercial banks, including overnight deposits with the BSP reached P2.5 trillion—up by 10.3 percent year on year.

Overnight deposits parked with the BSP effectively serve as loans to the central bank.

In its 2011 outlook, BDO said lending activities would continue to be strong, but the growth rate might not reach that of 2010.

Also, economic growth may range from 5 to 6 percent this year, BDO said.

Such a growth rate may be considered respectable, according to BDO. It said that a repeat of the 7-percent growth rate that was achieved before the year in 2011 due to base effects.

But there are still risks that may affect its economic forecast, BDO said.

"Some risks include accelerated inflation, given rising prices of oil in the world market, and external factors, such as the debt crisis in Europe and uncertainty of economic performance of industrialized countries that serve as export markets for the Philippines.

According to the latest government report, the economy measured in terms of gross domestic product, grew by 7.5 percent in the first three quarters of 2010.

It was the fastest rate of expansion seen in over three decades.

"While the country faces a challenge to repeat the economic expansion recorded in 2010, it is still expected to grow between 6 and 6.5 percent this 2011 due solid macroeconomic fundamentals," BDO said.

In 2011, power and utilities companies, as well as those involved in infrastructure, are the ones expected to engage in borrowing, BDO said.

Banks expect companies to secure loans to fund public infrastructure projects under the government's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program.

The program is meant to ease the government's financial strain while it pursues vital infrastructure projects with the help of the private sector.

The government has already started inviting private entities to invest in public infrastructure projects even as it struggles to balance its budget.

On consumers, the bank said that growing income levels could boost their credit demand to secure loans for big ticket items, such as real estate and automobiles.

"Consumer lending is expected to continue to grow due to strong consumer confidence, ethanol consumer demand, currently low penetration rates, higher per capita income and borrowing capacity," BDO said.

It added that these flexible loan terms offered by various banks could also entice consumers to borrow more.

Napocor seeks to hike SPUG rates

By Jerry R. Barrus

THE 8228 National Power Corp. wants to increase power rates in areas being served by the Small Power Utilities Group (SPUG) by an average of P1.3241 centavos per kilowatt hour (kWh).

In new petitions it filed with the Energy Regulatory Commission, the Napocor-SPUG sought to raise rates to between P1.0 and P1.5 kWh in selected Luzon, Visayas areas and P1.125 billion in fuel and purchased power costs under the 6th installment of the Incremental Currency Exchange Rate Adjustment (Icera) and the Generation Rate Adjustment Mechanism (GRAM), respectively.

Under its Icera application, Napocor-SPUG wants to impose an increase of 0.002 centavos per kWh over a one-year period. It explained that this would be charged directly to customers in SPUG areas and would not be billed under the universal charge for stranded/unrecovered cost or environmental charge.

Napocor currently maintains several small power facilities in areas not connected to the Luzon, Visayas or Mindanao grids.

The Napocor-SPUG currently operates 232 power plants with a total generated capacity of about 379 megawatts (MW). It serves 216 island and isolated grids, providing electricity to 40 customers consisting of 39 electric cooperatives, seven local government units and one multipurpose cooperatives.

Meanwhile, the Association of Isolated Electric Cooperatives Inc. yesterday appealed to President Aquino to help solve the power crisis gripping SPUG areas/islands.

According to AIEC, the power shortage in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao and Cebu island cooperatives is due to the lack of diesel supply, which was supposed to be provided by Napocor.

The group, composed of 30 isolated electric cooperatives, also urged that by the end of January 2011, all other islands under the Napocor-SPUG would experience a power shortfall.

"We the officers and members of AIEC as well as the thousands of our member consumers are appealing to President Aquino to forestall the crisis by taking direct and decisive action on this matter so as not to deprive the 2.2 million Filipinos of the benefits of one of the basic necessities—electricity," the group said in a joint ad yesterday.

BSP to probe banks' compliance

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas will soon examine banks' compliance with the new capital adequacy ratio (CAR) that covers counterbalancing types of risks.

BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr. told reporters that the Internal Capital Adequacy Assessment Process (ICAAP) would take effect this year and banks would be required to submit to the BSP a report on all their risk exposures, apart from credit and operational risks.

Nontraditional types of risks include market risks and reputational risk, wherein a bank may pursue controversial or bad publicity adversely affecting its performance.

Apart from enumerating its risk exposures, a bank will also need to put up additional capital necessary to cover those risks.

The BSP is now collecting ICAAP reports from banks.

Espenilla said that after the collection of the reports, the BSP would immediately begin to examine all banks to determine whether they have put up the necessary capital to cover all their risk exposures.

The ICAAP is one of the new regulations the BSP will enforce in 2011. Another is the imposition increase in the minimum capital adequacy ratio (CAR) requirement, which is currently at 10 percent.

Under the third stage of the Basel Accord, or the Basel 3, that is advocated by the international community the Bank for International Settlement (BIS), several banks are urged to impose a higher CAR requirement.

The objective is to help avoid a banking crisis similar to what had happened in the United States, which sparked a global economic turmoil.

According to Espenilla, the Philippine banking sector is stable, but the BSP nonetheless finds it prudent to adopt international accepted bank regulation standards.

He said banks in the Philippines would not likely find it difficult to adjust to a higher CAR requirement given that they are well capitalized.

Moreover, he said, the existing minimum international CAR requirement is only 8 percent, 2 percentage points lower than the 10 percent currently implemented in the Philippines.

He added that should the internationally accepted minimum CAR requirement be raised, say to 11 percent, then Philippine banks still find it easier to comply compared with their counterparts in other countries.

– Michelle V. Ramos

MERALCO boss B.Pil as the first member from the Philippines

International Electric Research Exchange (IERE) represented by Mr. Ron Nixon (back), Deputy Secretary General recently paid a courtesy visit with Mr. Oscar G. Reyes, Senior Executive Vice President & COO of Manila Electric Company. Meralco joins IERE as the first member from the Philippines. Joining the courtesy visit (seated from left): Ricardo P. Buenaventura | Executive Vice President and Head, Network Office; Mr. Oscar G. Reyes; Mr. Ron Nixon (back); Jesus P. Francisco | President of Meralco – Meralco subsidiary company's Shared Services unit; Ruben B. Marcelo (Far Left) Vice President, Head of Corporate Logistics Office; Teddy M. Kapunan (IERE Representative in the Philippines); Alfredo S. Panlilio (Seven) Vice President & Head Customer Retail Services & Corporate Marketing; Victor R. Basilio Vice President & Managing Director)

Stocks ... From page B1

while 37 issues remained unchanged.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was the most active stock, closing lower at P2,490 per share, followed by the Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. which also ended lower at P66.40 per share.

Metrobank yesterday listed P10 billion worth of new shares via stock rights issue, with the proceeds expected to help build up the bank's capital base. – Ibarlin L. Lucas

Investments ... From page B1

companies in the Philippines, expects the industry to grow by another 30 percent in 2011.

"The global electronics 'crash' appears to be looming for early 2011," Santiago added.

Itegi is set to promote the industry's strong performance in 2010 and to approximate methods for 2011 during the group's New Year's Fellowship Night on Jan. 28.

BSP sees January ... From page B1

cast in 2011 at 3.6 percent, which is well within the official target.

Tetangco said the full year in flation forecast would be reviewed to take into account new developments that might affect price movements.

"We are watchful of these risks to our inflation forecast, but at the moment, the forecast still shows a manageable inflation path over the policy horizon," Tetangco said.

Concerns From The private sector about accelerated inflation rate this year stemmed from the rising oil prices in the world market and the potential transport fare hikes.

Espenilla's peso pronounce expected this year are stronger than those seen in 2010.

The BSP has described the economy to be in a "sweet spot" last year as it enjoyed both fast economic growth and benign inflation.

Investors' appetite ... From page B1

Still, the risk-weighted modified duration of the bank's P1.72 billion against P1 billion worth of 91-day bills on offer.

Investors also tendered P5.19 billion for P1.5 billion worth of 182-day bills, and P5.23 billion for P5 billion worth of 364-day bills.

Earlier this month, the yield for the 10-year bond rose to a record low, averaging 8.7 percent.

Marcello Agra, vice president at Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., said the primary market could have seen the bottom as far as the 91-day debt paper was concerned.

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

FOR RENT

CALL FOR RATES

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

WANTED TO BUY

ROLEX LOUIS VUITTON

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

PUBLIC NOTICES

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Industrial Equipment, Office Furniture & IT Equipment, Household Furniture & Equipment, Miscellaneous Equipment & Audi Vehicle

Live Auction

Goindustry DoveBid

Department of Agriculture
PHILIPPINE CARABAO CENTER
BID 5001 2008

INVITATION TO BID

CONSTRUCTION OF PCC LIVESTOCK BIOTECHNOLOGY LABORATORIES

SUMMONS

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

SUMMONS

Republic of the Philippines
MARIA CRISTINA STATE UNIVERSITY

NOTICE OF SEARCH AND CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

More Classifieds

Bicol Medical Center

A13

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION

SUMMONS

Republic of the Philippines
Quezon Metropolitan Water District
Office of the Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO BID

OBITUARIES

Maria Carmen L. Leviste

(1951 – 2011)

Maria Carmen L. Leviste passed away in Carson, CA on January 13, 2011; she was 59 years old. She was born on February 3, 1951 in Cebu City, Philippines. There she was raised and educated. She is survived by her husband of 32 years, Evanston; daughters, Patricia and Katherine Leviste-Santia; son, Franz-Josef; son-in-law, Armando Miguel Santia; grandchildren, Kylie and Enzo. She has left behind her brother, Jose Jr.; sisters, Teresita, and Lisalin; aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, grandchildren and friends in the US and Philippines.

Viewing of ashes on Tuesday, January 25 and Wednesday, January 26 at Funeraria Paz, Sucat, Parañaque.

President of Cabanatuan Electric Corporation (CELCOR)

BELEN ESCUADRO VERGARA

August 27, 1921 – January 22, 2011

Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija

peacefully joined our Lord on January 22, 2011 at the age of 89.

Her loving nephew, **CABANATUAN CITY MAYOR JAY and Ria Vergara**, his children, **Myca, Myta, Mikko, Mimi, Mikey, Mariel, Jake and Gaea**, all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie at 130 Del Pilar Street, Cabanatuan City.

Interment will be on January 26, 2011 at the Cabanatuan Public Cemetery after the 9:00 am mass at the San Nicholas Cathedral.

In Loving Memory
on the 30th Death Anniversary of
Mariano B. Peñaflorida
who passed away on 26 January 1981.
Mass will be offered
Wednesday, 26 January 2011 at the following

Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park ..... 12 Noon
Sanctuario de San Jose, Greenhills ..... 7:15 a.m.
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori, Magallanes ..... 8:00 a.m.
Our Lady of Beneficio Fund, Makati ..... 9:00 a.m.
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice, U.P. ..... 10:00 a.m.
St. Joseph's Church, Potrero, Malo ..... 5:30 a.m.
St. Clement's Church, La Paz, Iloilo ..... 5:30 a.m.

The family requests relatives, friends and pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

In Loving Memory

EDITHA MONASTERIO PULIDO

On The 13th Anniversary of Her Birth To Eternal Life
10 June 1934 – 23 January 1998

The EDITHA MONASTERIO PULIDO MEMORIAL FOUNDATION, INC. and her family request the pious readers to pray for her eternal repose.

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die."

"... the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." – Romans 6:23

Anselma Climaco Ramas

"Emma"

Peacefully joined our Creator and her husband ***Maj. Gen. JOSEPHUS Q. RAMAS*** *on January 23, 2011 at the age of 81.*

Her children **WEE, BO** & **BENJ. FROI** & **LIBETH, JESSE**, her beloved grandchildren and great-grandchildren, thank and praise God for her life even as they mourn her passing.

Her body lies in state at the Della Strada Parish by La Vista along Katipunan Road, Resurreccion Chapel.

Interment will be on **Thursday, January 27, 2011** at the **Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City** after the **10:00 a.m. Mass** in Della Strada Parish.

Philippine Obituaries

CLASSIFIEDS

ICD Phil. Section to hold 44th annual convocation

Rhoda D. Yao

Corazon C. Jose

Be an EstrePinoy, join the AIESEC Negosyo Convergence 2011

BUSINESS

Splash sets up holding firm for overseas forays

Manufacturer prepares for foreign acquisitions

By Dianne L. Lucas

PHILCOX LISTED Splash Corp. said on Monday it had recently set up a holdings company in Singapore in preparation for "possible international acquisitions this year."

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the chairman and CEO of the personal hygiene products maker, Rolando Hortaleza, said the company had formed Splash Global Pte. Ltd. on "its need as a vehicle for possible mergers, acquisitions or joint ventures abroad."

"We're looking at brands or companies that we believe can help scale up Splash Corp.'s presence abroad," he said via text assessment. "While Splash is also looking at local companies and brands to acquire, the international market presents many opportunities for us."

The company's international sales account for over 30 percent of its total revenue, it said.

Splash added that its 2010 sales were expected to have reached "around P1 billion" last year, representing a 15 percent increase from the 917.71 billion recorded in 2009.

The company said in the statement that it expects revenue in 2011 to grow "by at least 20 percent."

"For the international markets, we're prioritizing Southeast Asia and Indochina," the company's president and CEO Ida Domingo said. "These are the markets we are aggressively penetrating and investing in for now."

He added that Splash was also expanding its presence in the field of commercial distribution by entering into more distributorship agreements in foreign markets.

Splash recently formed a distribution unit in Malaysia called Splash Hall Idea Sdn. Bhd. that will help widen its market reach in the area.

"We are very excited about the opportunities the international market presents our company," Hortaleza said. "By teaming up our position in the Asean and Indochina markets, we are confident we can obtain the growth targets we set in 2011."

Splash products are now available in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. It is also sold in markets in the Middle East and Africa.

On the PSE, shares of Splash end of the trading session at P2.50 per share, lower by 4.2 percent from the previous session's close of P2.61.

Value turnover on the stock was light, with only P120,000 worth of shares changing hands.

At present levels, the company has a market capitalization of P1.7 billion.

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* OVER 30 MACHINE TOOLS TO BE SHOWCASED *
* WITH SEMINARS CONDUCTED BY FOREIGN SUPPLIERS *

PLANETAGE
Electronic Copyboard
PHILCOPY

CEB expands, eyes more int'l passengers

By Riza T. Olchondra

CEBU PACIFIC Air plans to increase flight frequencies by 38 percent in 2011, making available 14.5 million airline seats to its passengers.

"We aim to fly 12 million passengers in 2011, an 10-percent increase from last year's targets. Internationally we plan to grow our passenger base by 35 percent," CEB vice president for marketing and distribution Candice Iyog said in a statement.

The airliner said it was increasing its service period 20-percent increase in passengers to China. Cebu Manila flies to Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Taipei, Macau and Hong Kong for a combined 80 flights a week.

"We have also just recently announced the beginning of CEB's Manila-Busan operations this June. We already fly to South Korea's second largest city Busan Cebu, and this new route will allow more tourists and business between the two countries," Iyog said.

She said that the number of flights to Beijing and Guangzhou will also be increased this year to accommodate passenger demand.

CEB already added flights to Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Brunei, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh and Jakarta last December.

The airline is slated to increase flight frequencies to Inchon (Incheon) and Bangkok in the first quarter this year.

"We are expecting the delivery of our 20th brand new Airbus A320 aircraft in the last week of January, and four more brand new aircraft in 2011," she said.

Between 2012 and 2014, Cebu Pacific will take an additional 30 Airbus A320 aircraft.

MISSION: ENDEAVOUR
GHP23M

Resorts World MANILA
LUCK & LOVE
2011
LUNAR NEW YEAR AND VALENTINE FESTIVAL
Join Resorts World Manila's exciting celebration of good fortune and sweet romance this February.
Feb 2
Feb 3
Feb 4
Feb 5
Feb 6
Feb 9
Feb 11
Feb 14
Feb 17
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Feb 28
The Place to PLAY
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Resorts World Manila fulfills dreams through the magic of Kaos

NEWPORT CITY PASAY- Join Resorts World Manila (RWM) in "Fulfilling Dreams through the magic of Kaos"! Guests who purchase a ticket to watch Kaos on January 27 (Thursday) will not only get a chance to experience a beautiful story of love and magic, but also an opportunity to extend a helping hand to the less fortunate, AND a chance to win the cruise of a lifetime!

Proceeds from the event will benefit the Living for Christ Foundation, Inc. (LFCF) Housing and Social Development Project for the poor in Sanchiron, Pampanga.

RWM partnered with Genting Hong Kong (GHK) to raffle off 180 one-night cruises from Star Cruises onboard the Star Pisces, departing from and returning to Hong Kong. Aside from that, a spectacular 7-day Western Mediterranean cruise onboard the Norwegian Epic, as well as 12 cruise packages departing from Singapore, Malaysia, and Taiwan will also be raffled off to the lucky guests.

Interested parties may avail of up to three raffle coupons for more chances at winning their dream cruise! Upper Balcony (PHP 1,000), Balcony (Php 1,500) and Deluxe (PHP 2,200) people entitles guests with one coupon, two for Premiere seats (PHP 3,000) and three coupons for VIP seats (PHP 5,000).

Kaos is RWM's first exclusive production that features the best in Filipino talent, as well as performers from all over the world. It is shown six-times weekly at the country's newest ultra-modern theater, the Newport Performing Arts Theater. For more information on Kaos, visit www.rwmanila.com.

"Fulfilling Dreams through the magic of Kaos" is a project of RWM's corporate social responsibility program Wellness, Security, Environment, and Education or WISE.

For ticket inquiries and reservations for this event, interested parties may contact Anna Lyn Agosto at (632) 813-5018, (0917) 5626520 or (0917) 5512333 or email inquiries@rwmanila.com.

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ENERGY COMPLETE

The world's best ballroom dancers converge in Manila for the Philippine StarBall

THE PHILIPPINE StarBall Dance Festival of Champions, set for Feb. 12, 2011 at the prestigious Makati Shangri-La Hotel, will bring in the best dancers in six different styles to wow the Filipino audience—a first in Manila, a first in Asia, a first in the world.

The dancers from the USA, Russia, Italy, Poland, England, Germany and Argentina will perform International Latin, International Standard, American Smooth, American Rhythm, Theatre Arts and the current reign in Manila, Argentine Tango.

Yulia Zagoruychenko and Riccardo Cocchi, champions of the WDC competition in Germany will rumba, pass doble, and cha-cha their way into the hearts of the crowd. Joining them in Latin dances will be top Brazilian in Blackpool remembered the Olympics off ballroom (tearing) Michael Malinowski and Joanna Leunis from Poland, No. 1 from Germany Franco Formica and Oksana Lebedeva, and No.1 from Russia Sergey Surkov and Melis.

Doing the waltz, tango, foxtrot and quick step will be Blackpool champions Arunas Bizokas and Kristina Rimkute and No. 1 from Italy Mirko Gennili and Ilaria Saccani. New styles of dances will also be introduced from champions in their respective fields.

Also for the first time in the Philippine StarBall is the addition of two of the very best couples from Buenos Aires performing authentic Argentine Tango dances. They are Carolina Zeballo with Diego di Reto, Tony Israel) nominees for Best Choreography and performers of "Forever Tango," and Miriam Lutri with Leonardo Barrionuevo, winners of MK's new series "Superstars of Dance" and featured performers and choreographers of "So You Think You Can Dance."

Organizing the super production is Michaela "Micky" Paez, former ballet teacher and a ballroom dancer in her own right. She has been bringing in top international ballroom dancers the past three years, and will open the evening with a number with her partner and teacher Hans Gregor, dancing an American Smooth Viennese Waltz. The routine was specially choreographed by former Russian dance champion Taisa Tsevtkova.

A dance congress during the day will feature lectures by such expert. Admission is limited.

For additional information and tickets, contact Marissa at tel. no. 812-8464. Beneficiary for this show is AYNIG, helping children with cancer.

RECOMMEND: Ivanca Sip replacement, organizer Pinky Perez poses with teacher Clara Gregor.

SENSUOUS Lorien and Melis, Russian champion.

ARANAS Bizokas and Kamerta Daveiderie in a classic waltz

MEDICard, The Healthcare I Deserve!

Take Charge, Doc!

Cancer: What You Can Do

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FOR 2011:

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BEER BELLY
Lose 2cm off your stomach in one session – guaranteed. No matter how hard you suck your stomach in, you can never look a beer belly. Getting rid of excess belly fats can be frustrating to men. Workouts and fad diets can only go so far. In fact, these won't give you the results that you really want. Lose your belly the fastest way possible. Ultrashape melts away that stubborn fat in your target areas.

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Burn up to 2,000 calories in 25 minutes while lying down with Fat Modulation System. It's the faster and easier way to lose unwanted fat and pounds. As a bonus, the calorie burning continues up to 2 days after your sessions. Yes, it's that effective. So instead of the workout burnouts and hunger pains, get speedy and visible results with FMS.

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DICK TRACY

LOVE SHOTS BY ELIZABETH HOROWITZ

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

KIKO MACHINE BY MARK ALAMO

SEIH BY DANIEL SHELTON

Laging nakakaing ng dinner sa 8:30 AM 10:00 AM 1:00 PM Lunes hanggang Byernes

SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY

TULDOK BY MARA COLL

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

TOO DARN TOUGH You're a cutting person, in part because you have a sharp mind and you're not afraid to use your faculties. Some people may be rebellious and inquisitive, but we wish more folks, no matter age, were more like you. Understanding, tolerance and compassion are fine traits, but they're not the only ones that will help you reach your mid-life. After that, you become a serious learner about going after whatever you want. This year, an important phase starts for you. Unbelievably.

Birthdays of: Anita Hill, Abigail Van Buren, Max Lerner, singer Tanya Black (who

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Discussions with partners and close friends will flow easily today. In fact, parties are indicated. Don't be overwhelmed or overbooked.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) You might want to help a co-worker today, or vice-versa. People are willing to listen to the suggestions that others have because it's easy to identify with them.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) If you can help a child or someone who's younger today, you will. Other people will be stimulated by creative input and artistic inspiration, because you are in touch with your inner.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Loyalty will be very significant to you today. Be sure to show your friends and family members how much you care. Also, a family member is very much.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) You might want to stay home today or spend the time somewhere quiet because it's easy to get distracted by the hustle-bustle. Don't make any major decisions until you've had time to think things over.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You might be tempted to spend money on luxuries, elegant items that make you comfortable and special pleasures. Think twice before parting with your hard-earned cash.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You're especially attuned to the thoughts, words and actions of others. You'd be aware of deceptions as some relief somebody says before he or she even opens his or her mouth.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) You might want to pursue activities or involve others in you are alone today. You're not in a position to be much help to others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You might work with others in a group situation to help someone who's been overwhelmed by one of the minor, petty irritations that can accompany life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You might persuade your boss, a parent or someone in authority to change something someone is accustomed to doing. Don't be afraid to voice your ideas, because we listen to you.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You have the ability to sense your deep, inner feelings today and that something exciting and different is on. You need to get away from routine!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Your creative, artistic instincts will be very perceptive with someone who is new. Someone. (Dave Barry, James Hampton are right at the top of your today.)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3×3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs and information, visit www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

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Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

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Difficulty Level ★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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Kiteboarding, windsurfing —Bora hosts international windsport cup

By Anne A. Jardioza

OVER A HUNDRED windsport athletes and enthusiasts are expected to flock the shores of Boracay once again for the annual Boracay International Funboard Cup 2011.

Listed last year by ESPNstar.com among the Top 10 Windsurfing Festivals to visit the World, along with other world events such as the Fifth World Cup and Australian Open, the Boracay Funboard Cup is now among the most sought-after windsport events this side of the world.

"The Boracay Int'l Funboard Cup is the biggest windsurfing event in Asia, and the region's longest running and most successful island sporting event," said race organizer and international windsurfing champion Nonoy de Guinoo Gral.

Gral, who says she fell in love with windsurfing in 1994, has seen how the sport has grown from a mere group of local enthusiasts into a major international event. Today, some of the best sailors in the sport are Filipinos.

FREESTYLE defending champion Ben Harar

"The real advantage Boracay has over other beaches in Asia is the excellent wind condition"

Expanded competition

Here on its 22nd year, the competition has also expanded to include the fastest growing windsport in the world—kiteboarding. The rapid rise of kiteboarding's popularity, said Gral, is mainly due to the fact learning curve of the sport. (Kiteboarding was included in the competition five years ago.)

"Kids have a much easier time learning kiteboarding than windsurfing, that's why most runners used to this sport. It's freestyle surfing, less technical and doesn't demand too much strength," Gral said.

Hal Pryde, owner of a top windsurfing company that bears his name, has been a major supporter of the event since the mid-'80s. The Boracay Funboard became popular all over Asia so quickly, he said, that he wanted to give something back to the island. He's his company and the Cup.

"Boracay is one of the most storied sites in Asia for this kind of sport. We'd like to help promote it further by bringing in more people from around the world. The real advantage Boracay has over other beaches in Asia is the excellent wind conditions. As a windsport company, we are very much dependent on wind to operate, and Boracay delivers just the perfect conditions for us," Pryde said.

Slalom race

Kicking off on Jan. 24 and culminating on Jan. 29, the 22nd Hal Pryde Boracay Int'l Funboard Cup's main events is the Slalom Race, held everyday during the Cup. Windsurfers race 200 meters offshore, turn around five buoys before going full speed to the finish line. The Slalom winner will be crowned Boracay Cup champion.

There will also be a Speed Trial, where speed goes monster surfers' speeds as they race down a 200-meter course. Participants will be judged daily, the participant with most wins snags the prize.

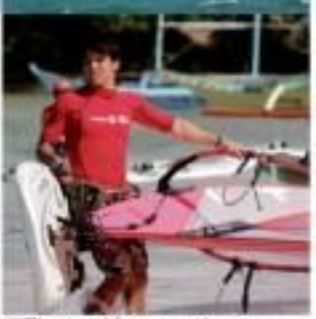
Kiteboarding, the newest addition to the lineup, will have the Kiteboarding Course Race, Speed and Sling Shots. All events will be held at the Bulabog Beach.

Gral also said plans are underway for a windsurfing tour this year. Covering its areas (Puerto Galera, Anilao, Subic, Batangas, Subic and Boracay), the tour will be the first of its kind in the country.

Registration is ongoing. Fees—windsurfing (P1115); kiteboarding (P1150). Special price for Philippine residents is P50 for each event, while Junior category and the Philippine Team is P50.

For more details, visit www.boracayinternational.com

WOMEN'S freestyle defending champ Cora-Ani Castillo



LANCE Jones, last year's first runner-up, men's category

Yes, you can eat to lose weight

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

FOR AS long as we eat to live and not live to eat, we cannot go wrong. In short, you won't have a serious problem with weight gain. But there are simple guidelines. No need to starve or skip meals. In fact, an empty stomach will lead to all sorts of complications like senility, ulcers, low blood sugar, migraines and irritability. Eat food, when taken in moderate amounts three to five times a day, assures you of gradual weight loss.

In order to lose weight, stick to fruits and vegetables that rank low on the glycemic index. For example, did you know that watermelon is high on the glycemic index, simply because it is so scientifically sweet? But that doesn't mean that we should never eat watermelon.

As a nutritional fruit, it is low in carbohydrates and high in water, and contains lycopene, a carotenoid that has anti-inflammatory power (others are tomato, red grapefruit and guava). But never is a way to over-emphasize water, minus the points, which is quickly converted to sugar. Here are some guidelines:

What not to eat

Eat your protein before anything sweet, or risk your high glycemic food with vegetables. Dried fruits (raisins, prunes, figs, dates) are high in anti-inflammatory fiber and anti-oxidants. However, they are high in sugar and calories. You may, however, mix it with oatmeal or yogurt. Avoid baked goods, rolls, bread, cake, candy, cereals (except old-fashioned oatmeal), soft drinks (drink in hard (beer), muffins, sour syrup, donuts, fast food, French fries, granola, jams, jellies, popcorn, potatoes, snack foods, sodas, sugar, vegetable oils (except virgin olive oil and virgin coconut oil), pasta and noodles (unless multi-grain).

What to eat

Fruits and vegetables, apples, arugula, asparagus, avocado, blueberries, cucumbers, green beans, all dark green leafy vegetables, eggplant, broccoli, cauliflower).

Fatty-organic eggs, low-fat cottage cheese

Nuts-organic almonds, walnuts, flaxseed, soya, cashews, peanuts, sesame, squash, tomatoes, turnips, mushrooms, peppers

Omega-3 seafood-mackerel, sardines, anchovies, salmon, halibut, any white fish, trout, herring, sea bass, shellfish

Poultry-organic chicken and turkey, Canadian bacon, turkey sausage and bacon (minus nitrates)

Sweeteners—no chemical sweeteners like Splenda (also known as sucralose), saccharin, aspartame, neosaltame K, xylitol. A safe sweetener is Stevia, a non-calorie herb from Paraguay that is a natural food. It is one of the safest alternatives to conventional and chemical sweeteners. Coconut sugar also ranks low on the glycemic index and is safe for diabetics. (*Jeff Bowles of BluZones, tel. no. 721-3870. Reference: "The Hardcore Weight-Loss Diet" by Nicholas Perricone, MD*)

Bare your sugar

It seems like everything we eat turns to sugar. And in some food preparations, sugar is added to sweeten the dish. You should be aware of these hidden sugars. But whatever you eat, always remember that exercise will burn the calories that sugar brings.

Remember: Eat less but more often, exercise daily, drink generous amounts of water, and adopt a cheerful attitude in life.

Mikey today: "This is my world!"

Love and light

St. Luke's Medical Center launches radio program on health care

ST. LUKE'S Medical Center has launched a radio program that aims to inform and explain to listeners the many causes of various illnesses and how these can be prevented through consultations with medical experts, and by having a healthy lifestyle.

Dubbed "Health Care Plus," the program aims to educate Filipinos on various health issues as well as the multi-disciplinary approaches to problem solving. The latest in medical technologies and the numerous wellness programs that are being offered in St. Luke's.

The program is hosted by veteran broadcaster Marlen Tronquez. There will be guest specialists to discuss specific illnesses like cancer, brain and heart problems, digestive and liver ailments, quality care and a host of other health-related topics.

Health Care Plus can be heard Mondays to Fridays from 7:00 to 8 p.m. on business radio, dwBR (104.3 FM).

Conference on Philippine Culture

Bruno Movement for Cultural Advancement, Inc or Kilusang Kayamanggi, an NGO which aims to preserve, promote and enhance the Filipino cultural genius, is holding a three-day seminar-workshop on Philippine culture on April 18 at the National Library, Rizal Park, Manila.

Topics include the challenges of globalization and technology, preserving indigenous beliefs, rituals and traditions, documenting/preserving cultural traditions and landmarks, issue of gender equality and empowerment, teacher training, sustaining the positive values of Filipinos and the positive images of the Philippines.

Invited speakers are Prof. Felipe B. de Leon Jr., Ymbaches "Oni" dela Torre, Dr. Nina Catalan, Dr. Myrna Reyes, Bernard Fernando, Nilla Lopa, Corazon "Baby" del Mundo and Roland Tolentino.

For early bird registration is P1,500 while the regular registration fee is at P1,750. The conference is open to all teachers, professionals, cultural workers and college students.

For details, call 8154605 or 8158870 or e-mail at cbbrkalinan@yahoo.com

EMERALD JUBILARIANS OF COLLEGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The annual homecoming of students from the College of the Holy Spirit is set on Feb. 6 at the college grounds in Mendiola, Manila. All jubilarians (Silver, Pearl, Coral, Sapphire, Ruby, Golden, Emerald and Diamond) are currently preparing for their traditional presentations for the program to be held at the College Auditorium.

Emerald jubilarians in photo are (back row) Betty Barro, Rosalina Sun, Cora Sunsay, Rania Abbas, (middle row) Teresita Borgonia, Dorothy Duque, Norma Cabutingan, Gering Bautista, Catalina Amerasio (front row) Cristina Normanto, Portia Rabia, Amelia Zinar, Olivia Morales, Monica Lee and Shirley Tang.

SUN promo

Sun Cellular's Todo IDD Talong Card is one way call your loved ones abroad for only P2 per minute. Call China, Hong Kong, Singapore, St. Lucia, Canada, Guam and Hawaii for P3 per minute. And you can also call other countries such as Taiwan, Macau and Malaysia for as low as P5 per minute. For Japan and Italy, it's P6 per minute. While Saudi Arabia, UAE, BK, Bahrain and Kuwait, call cost is P10 per minute.

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Get rid of the weight you gained this Christmas by starting your new year exercise program asap. Organize your sports gear and exercise stuff in a bag that's ready to hit the gym, court or pool any time.

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Inner Awareness

ERNIE J. ZARA

'How can we tell which dreams are going to happen?'

READER ISSUE Sarcasm says she used to be cynical about paranormal phenomena because of her strong belief in the Christian faith... "until I was assigned in Cambodia three years ago.

"I encountered a female clairvoyant who could tell the future. She told me I would meet my love in July of 2009". In that month, my former love interest came back through text messages. I remembered the words of the clairvoyant, that I would meet my love in July. I just smiled and said to myself that the meeting may not be physical, but a reconnection with a friend met on a different mode.

"That was a turning point in my life. Since then, I became an avid reader of your columns, and even bought a book of yours. I became interested in spirituality, extrasensory perception, astrology and anything beyond normal phenomena. I have not gone Buddhist after long years of stay in Cambodia. On the contrary, my Christianity has been strengthened. I believe God is a universal God.

Questions about religion, intuition and ESP

"I always look forward to your columns, because it inspires me and brings hope for others. I hope to buy more of your books. May the good Lord bless you!"

Thank you so much for your sincere and kind words about my works. I am glad to know they have helped you go beyond particular religious beliefs. Actually, you don't have to change your religion to pursue your interest in parapsychology, which is a science. I see no conflict between belief in extraordinary phenomena and religion, because each means reasonable is still.

The search for truth is a never-ending quest for mankind. But as I have always pointed out, "Finding truth is not so hard; what is hard is not to run away from truth once you have found it."

Another reader, Girlx (not her real name), on the other hand, has always been interested in knowing who she was in a past life. "I always end up," she says, "surfing the Internet regarding ancient civilizations and the mummies of England. I want to know if I had lived in those times."

"I also want to ask about my husband's strange dreams the past eight months. Some of his dreams turn out to be true. He's been dreaming of certain personalities dying or getting sick, of disasters hitting other countries. I get terrified when he tells me that. He dreams of these things a month or two before they happen. I told him to pray for God's grace so they won't happen.

"Is there a way to know which are just plain dreams, and which will really happen?"

Girlx, you are my past life hypnotic regression, which I do during my "Soul-mates, Karma and Reincarnation" seminar (scheduled Feb. 12) for the entire class, or go for individual regression, which I do by appointment for a reasonable professional fee.

Since husband's dreams which come true are called "precognitive" or "psychic" dreams. According to a study by David Ryback, about 53 percent of Americans' dreams are precognitive. However, in the Philippines I guess that estimate will double to about 2/3 percent, because Filipinos are more sensitive and open to these things compared to Americans.

If your husband is interested to know more about dreams and how to analyze and interpret them, he may attend my forthcoming two-day seminar on Mind Mind Development scheduled Jan. 29-30. "Dreams" is only one of the topics discussed in this seminar. The others are how the brain works, brain programming, positive thinking, meditation, stress control, self-healing through visualization, contacting your inner advisor, remote viewing, subjective reference points, and goal-setting using the whole brain.

Reader Alan Caparas wants to know "Which is easier to develop, ESP or intuition?"

I don't see any essential or major difference between these two. They are the same, as far as I am concerned, only called by different names. Some people prefer to call it "intuition" rather than "ESP." I also do not like the word ESP or "extrasensory perception" because it implies that some have it and others don't. I believe everybody has ESP or intuition. It is a natural faculty or function of our inner mind. It is just that some people have more developed ESP or intuition than others. But with the proper training, anybody can manifest at least one or two ESP powers. I've taught thousands of people how to develop their ESP or intuitive faculties through my seminars and workshops. The distinction between these two terms is a matter of personal preference, nothing more. Both are easy to develop.

E-mail the author at jzara@asiapac.com or visit www.joezaraseminars.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Edna Emma G. Velarde

Sandara's group No. 2 overall

THE TOPNOTCHES albums in the country for the week Jan. 13-18 based on Odyssey Music & Video's nationwide sales reports:

THE 4th GIRL — MONDAYS 03
group 3-in-1

Over 60 bands, 200 musicians in one music fest

By Pocholo Concepcion

THERE'S a lot of anxiety on the part of the promoters of the Last Minahanlan concert tonight at the Newport Performing Arts Theater in Resorts World Manila.

Reason is that Minahanlan is the First solo Filipinas ant to perform at the 5,000-capacity venue. The Newport Theater-operated Onemotion last year and reboot Banquet show is the "Broadway meets Vegas" stage musical "Rasa," which features an international cast and crew of 80 (!!!).

Resorts World is currently a hot tourist attraction and the promoters have booked the Banquet Theater with an all-OPM lineup for the rest of 2011. Actually if that venue needs beefing up in terms of marking local acts, the promoters need not look far.

All they have to do is check out some of the shows at the Philippine International Jazz Festival which runs from Feb. 3 to 20 in select malls, clubs, hotels and even restaurants.

The fest is featuring over 60 bands and 200 musicians.

Most of the shows will be held in Metro Manila, with a few dates in Boracay and Bacolod. Many of the dates offer free entrance. Only the main shows will sell tickets. (For a full listing of the schedules, log on to pjazz.com.)

Like most of the world's renowned music events, the fil. Jazz fest, now on its 6th year, is a showcase of a wide variety of musical styles from foreign and local artists whose skills may be viewed in the course of the fest.

HUBERT Lim

Best session musicians

There's the ASAP Big Band, composed of some of the country's best session musicians, conducted by in-demand musical director Mel Mikiza.

A bunch of female acts on the bill would no doubt delight their fans. Gooby Chua, lead vocalist of the pop-rock band Color It Red and Bituine as excellent jazz and blues singer; Eliseo Sison, leader of the samba group Sinsirimo; the hard-working singer/dancer/actress Shaiko Mata, known for her diverse musical influences; Kat Agarrado who will play with her band Xtasoltan; 9nine, who has its unusually augmented or singer-less voices on Jacqui Magno and the Camillo.

Also performing are folk/blues artist Malsha Salonga (Ting Tayo), Chamberlain Clarion (USA), Chanel Morales (USA), Queen Latifah (Singapore), Jon Irabagon (USA), Carlos Jenkins (USA), Ric Inlard (USA) and Boy Kanlaog, who's planning to release hers again.

Rock guitarist Nicky Gonzalez is the main act to an all-blues night at Jabez de Sting at Manila Peninsula Hotel.

The main shows at Resorts World will headline Saturday, the Amerikans jazz supergroup composed of Bob James, Marlsan East, Harvey Mason and Chuck Loeb; Hubert Laws (playing with sister Debra Laws); the Scandinavian jazz quartet Getup Mysterig; Australian jazz quartet Legig; and several others.

An all-star gala night will close the fest on Feb. 20 at the Ayala Museum.

FOURPLAY
(clockwise from top L): Bob James, Chuck Loeb, Harvey Mason, Marlsan East

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Eric . . .

from page D4

of his relationship with Marian Rivera. I know they are happy together."

Hmmm... There's really SOMEthing about the Baguio women h Girl!

Like watching MJ

I am counting the days and my hours, brain before Janet Jackson's concert at PICC on Feb 4. As you all know by now, I am a Michael Jackson die-hard. Watching Janet for the second time would be the next best thing to watching MJ live all over again.

My date for the concert is my "Inema friend" Me thi who wants to dance a la Janet to the tune of his hit song, "My Garote?" For sure, Janet will have a touching tribute for MJ.

When they were kids, MJ would pretend

JANET jackson

is he Fred Astaire and Janet would play Ginger Rogers. In one awards night, MJ pulled Janet close to him and said, "This is a dream come true that Janet and I are one and the same person." But in a deeper sense, Janet said MJ was truly one. And that would be most evident during Janet's upcoming concert once salaver she will be MJ's legacy lead her ways.

E-mail sweetie balabarge@yahoo.com

Sandra's...

from page D1

Overall

1) Willie Revillame, "I Love You," Viva; 2) Zsa Zsa Padilla, "Ito Sigurado," Universal; 3) Zsa Zsa Padilla, "Ito Na Yun," Universal; 4) Taylor Swift, "Speak Now [Deluxe Edition]," MCA; 5) Justin Bieber "My Worlds: The Collection," MCA; 6) Taylor Swift, "Taylor Swift," MCA; 7) Josh Baldivino, "Faithfully," Star; 8) Various Artists, "My Popstar Demand 3," Universal; 9) Josh Baldivino, "I'll Do Anything But Love," Star; 10) Ornace Hora, "Time Stops & Goodbyes," Viva

OPM

1) Willie Revillame, "I Love You," Viva; 2) Josh Baldivino, "Faithfully," Star; 3) Various Artists, "My Popstar Demand 3," Universal; 4) Josh Baldivino, "I'd Do Anything But Love," Star; 5) Lea Salonga, "Your Songs," Sony; 6) Richard Poon, "I'll Be Among You," MCA; 7) Regine Velasquez, "Testimony," Universal; 8) Sarah Geronimo, "Popular," Universal; 9) Soundtrack, "I Love Seventeen," MCA; 10) Pilita Corrales, "Decades 2," Star

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Eric Quizon proud of new 'baby'

BIRTHDAY Boy Eric Quizon is proud of his new sitcom, TV5's "Bahaong Manggahan," topbilled by Ate Gay.

"It's the first time Filipino-Chinese traditions are tackled on local TV," he says. "There are many sensitive aspects so we need to be very careful. I think directing shows with Joyce Bernal. I don't want to think of it as who's the first or second director. Joyce and I work as a team. I'm happy to see my former bo love team Alice Dixson who's on the rise. She's been away in the provinces about what it's like in be a director. Sonny she wants to try directing, too."

What's the real score of his dad Dolphy's health? "People have been enquiring about my dad's health condition," Eric explains. "He just has regular check-ups because of his age but nothing serious. He still wants to work. It serves as his vitamins. He still wonders if he stops working. Making people happy through his

Alex Gonzaga

movies is what he lives for."

He'll be his dad's favorite soon? "I don't know for sure," he says, laughing. "At last count, we are 17 kids. That's the official tabulation. Dad complains me about important matters."

How does he feel that Jessica Sodillo is now in charge of ISO Productions? "It's fine with me," he says. "Jess and I are almost the same age. (he's 44) so neglected mother/father issues and we both have the best interest and we both know the best interest of dad in mind. She makes my dad happy and takes good care of him so it's only fitting that dad would entrust ISO to her."

Cesar's song

Could it be true that Cesar Montano's song number for Sharon Cuneta's birthday concert won't be aired on ABS-CBN's Megastar birthday special because Bulaw is still under contract with GMA 7? The Kapuso network should get busy on Bulaw's long standing friendship with Sharon (not outside the concert was

Richard's new lady

Sam Pinto is slated to be star of Richard Gutierrez's leading ladies in Captain Barbell, "ang dami nating mag-audition," she says. "Eto, buhay! was chosen. I got one screen

the first time I met Chard. He made me feel at ease right away" laughs

Not missing the Regine stars are teasing her? "Believe it or not, smile," she reveals. "I don't know if they are scared of me or intimidated. Ma may napo-nervous ako kay Raymond is a star."

Her manager Claire de la Rosa, says that Bangbang Bustos requested Sam on be part of the cast of his new show, "Wenn Ten Feet" but GMA opted to include her in Richard's onscreen.

"Dang and I are just on a hi-hello basis," she says. "I don't want to get to the way